

For immediate release

Literacy Partners of Manitoba Leads Unique Family Literacy Initiative for Immigrants

Program supported by The Winnipeg Foundation

Winnipeg, MB – January 25, 2007 – In advance of National Family Literacy Day on January 27, Literacy Partners of Manitoba (LPM) is pleased to announce a \$45,000 grant from The Winnipeg Foundation to support an innovative family literacy initiative to work with immigrants as they settle in the city.

The funding will be used to establish the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPPY) program in Winnipeg . HIPPPY is an international literacy and early learning program with seven other sites in Canada .

"We are all very encouraged by recent statistics that suggest more immigrants than ever are settling in Manitoba ," said Lorri Apps, Executive Director of Literacy Partners of Manitoba. *"However, we need to recognize that this opportunity also presents certain challenges. We need to ensure new immigrants have access to community services sensitive to their own culture and in their own language while working to increase their English or French literacy and language skills. HIPPPY helps us accomplish this."*

"The Winnipeg Foundation is pleased to be a part of bringing HIPPPY to Winnipeg ," said Richard Frost , Chief Executive Officer of The Winnipeg Foundation. *"HIPPPY will help our community ensure that new immigrant families coming to our city have immediate access to family literacy services and programs. We are very pleased to support Literacy Partners of Manitoba on this project,"* Frost added.

The HIPPPY program promotes the parent as the child's best teacher. It helps parents teach their preschool youngsters so their child gets a head start in school. HIPPPY focuses on supporting new immigrant families in a culturally sensitive way. Under the leadership of a program director, parents from the community are employed as home visitors to improve family literacy and ensure that it is relevant to the needs of new immigrants.

"With its rich multicultural community, Winnipeg is a great fit for HIPPPY," said Richard Stursberg, Chairman of HIPPPY Canada . *"Our experience from the other seven sites across the country is that HIPPPY is making a very positive impact on the quality of life for new immigrant families who may be at risk of being left behind. In addition to promoting family literacy, we are finding that preschool children graduating from the program are becoming better adapted to the classroom and enjoy school more."*

The funding announced today will help LPM establish Canada 's 8th HIPPPY site in Winnipeg – in partnership with the St. James Assiniboia Neighbourhood Resource Network. The Winnipeg Foundation will also consider additional annual funding for the HIPPPY project."

"We are confident the HIPPY program will help us address many of the literacy and learning challenges faced by new Canadians settling in St. James," said Connie Newman, Coordinator Learning Way Intergenerational Project hosted by the St. James Assiniboia Seniors Centre. "We look forward to working with Literacy Partners on this exciting new partnership in the years ahead."

The HIPPY program was first developed in Israel in 1969 in response to the literacy needs of families living on low-incomes and the lack of their children's school-readiness. Today, HIPPY is employed by nine countries and serves over 22,000 families.

Since being established here in 1999, **HIPPY Canada** has helped more than 1300 Canadian families – including close to 400 this year in Toronto , Montreal , Vancouver and four BC Aboriginal communities.

- 30 -

Backgrounders:

*Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Canada
Winnipeg Foundation
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BACKGROUNDER

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Canada

HIPPY is an international literacy and early learning program with seven sites in Canada - and hundreds more around the world. It was first developed in Israel in 1969 in response to the literacy needs of families living on low-incomes and the lack of their children's school-readiness.

Today, HIPPY is employed by nine countries and serves over 22,000 families. Since being established here in 1999, **HIPPY Canada** has helped more than 1300 Canadian families – including close to 400 last year.

HIPPY Canada is a non-profit organization with charitable status. HIPPY Canada is led by a volunteer Board of Directors and an Executive Director. Canadian HIPPY sites are located in Vancouver , Toronto , Montreal , four Aboriginal communities. New sites are being developed in Winnipeg and Ottawa.

Winnipeg Foundation

The Winnipeg Foundation, was established in 1921 and is Canada's first community foundation. Today, the Winnipeg Foundation is the second-largest community foundation in Canada, with more than 1,700 endowment funds established by people from all walks of life. These donors have all shared the Foundation's vision of "a Winnipeg where community life flourishes."

The Winnipeg Foundation fulfils this vision through grant-making that meets the needs of the community, while respecting donors' wishes. Over the past 80 years the Foundation has distributed more than \$175,000,000 to charitable organizations in our community.

Through permanent endowment funds, The Winnipeg Foundation helps to strengthen the community and create a legacy for all of our donors. All funds held at The Winnipeg Foundation are pooled and invested and the income earned is distributed as grants that support community projects.

In response to needs identified by charitable organizations, The Winnipeg Foundation makes grants to local registered charities in the areas of arts, culture, heritage, community services, education, health, recreation and the environment. Through these permanent endowments, the Foundation is able to meet the needs of community organizations now and forever.

Literacy Partners of Manitoba (LPM)

LPM is committed to raising literacy levels in the province. We believe that literacy is a human right, that literacy is everyone's business and that all Manitobans have a part to play.

Our literacy organization was founded in 1987 as Literacy Workers Alliance of Manitoba. It was incorporated as Literacy Partners of Manitoba in 1996. The head office is located in Winnipeg.

LPM is a charitable not-for-profit organization which holds an Annual General Meeting, and elects a voluntary Board of Directors. The Board is a governance board, developing the policies of the Corporation according to the bylaws and directions of the membership.

LPM operates a resource centre with a wide variety of literacy materials and resources, produces the newsletter *Write On* and e-bulletins, and provides bursaries to support learners and practitioners.