



## Strong Start to Reading

You are invited to be part of an exciting literacy program at Echo Place School. Volunteers are needed to work with our Senior Kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 2 children who need an extra boost at this time of year to assure that they are successful in learning the names of letters, a sound each one makes, how to learn words by sight and how to learn a word by using the sounds of its letters. A program called **Strong Start Letters, Sounds and Words** has been used very successfully in many schools. Volunteers have consistently been excited about how much they enjoy working with the program. They are delighted to realize how much they can help a child in a short period of time. Also, many volunteers have said that what they learn by volunteering in this program is very useful to them in helping their own children or pursuing a career. We are very pleased to have the opportunity to provide this program for our students. The program fits perfectly with our classroom curriculum.

We need your help to make it work. The **Letters, Sounds and Words** program operates for 10 weeks. Volunteers work with one child at a time for about 30-35 minutes, playing games and activities that give the child lots of repetition in recognizing letters, sounds and words. All the materials are provided in the kit and each volunteer attends two training sessions and receives detailed instruction in the easy-to-use Volunteer Manual. You can help a child tremendously by giving even 30 minutes of your time each week for 10 weeks. We hope, however, that you can stay at least an hour per week (or more) to help two (or more) children, since we want to help as many as we can. If you can volunteer more than one a week, you can help each child even more.

The **Letters, Sounds and Words** program is special in that there are very few such programs that have been created to be used specifically by volunteers who do not need to have experience in a related field. The program has been developed by a retired Educator in Waterloo Region and is funded through donations from the community. You can learn even more about **Strong Start** on the website – [www.strongstart.ca](http://www.strongstart.ca)

We do hope you will join us in this project. Training is offered in late September so that we can start the 10 week session in October. The program really is easy to use and we're sure you will enjoy it. Let us know which days you are available and we will do our best to work around your schedule. If you have an interest and would like more information, please call our site co-ordinator, Sandy Zavarella (LRT) at 519-753-2931. Please fill out the form attached and return it to the school office.

Sincerely,

**Cheryl Innes**  
Vice-Principal  
Echo Place School