



## MEDIA ADVISORY

# Canada Needs a National Literacy Action Plan - Now!

**TORONTO, Ontario** – September 8, 2006. Today is International Literacy Day. You’d think that we wouldn’t need a day for literacy any longer and yet forty-two percent of Canadian adults have trouble with everyday reading skills. Literacy is an essential skill in our knowledge-based society. Something needs to be done.

We are calling on the government of Canada to implement the national literacy action plan that was designed last year by a team of literacy leaders. The plan calls for a campaign to teach one million adults over the next decade.

We do not need another round of consultations. We do not need more research. To paraphrase Stephen Lewis, we need more people studying and fewer studies.

- 42 per cent of adult Canadians have trouble with everyday tasks that involve reading.
- Improving literacy levels requires a collective response: public, private, individual and corporate.
- If Canada wants to compete in the global economy, we need to invest in literacy.
- Literacy is an essential skill in today’s knowledge-based society and a fundamental right for all Canadians.
- Low literacy levels hold Canadians back from reaching their full potential on many levels.
- Frontier College has taught millions of Canadians to read and write over 107 years.
- Frontier College reaches more than 55,000 people in need each and every year.
- We need to reach many, many more.

“Canadians with low literacy skills don’t need us to worry about them. They don’t need us to feel sorry for them. They need us to teach them,” says John O’Leary, President of Frontier College.

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To talk to John O’Leary, President of Frontier College and Canada’s leading literacy expert, contact: Sandi Kiverago, Director of Communications, Frontier College at 416-923-3591 ext. 318 or [skiverago@frontiercollege.ca](mailto:skiverago@frontiercollege.ca)

Literacy is an essential skill in today’s world. At Frontier College, we believe it’s a fundamental right. Low literacy skills are directly linked to poverty, poor health and high unemployment. Forty-two percent of adult Canadians have trouble with everyday tasks that involve reading. That’s millions of Canadians who are not reaching their potential. Through a network of thousands of volunteers, Frontier College is helping people to realize their potential and seize the opportunities that come their way. [www.frontiercollege.ca](http://www.frontiercollege.ca)