



## Grandparents and Storybook Reading: A First Step to Literacy

Wesley Urban Ministries is a major charitable organisation that works to reduce poverty and injustice in the city of Hamilton, Ontario. Daljit Garry, Director of Family and Youth programs, and Jack Maga, board member, knew that storybook reading with young children from the start of life was the route to literacy and resulted in educational, social, and economic success for all. They noted that many young children spend the majority of their day under the care of their grandparents. They asked, can a community program provide guidance and tools to motivate and support grandparents in storybook reading?

To bring research evidence and other forms of information to bear on the development of a storybook reading program for grandparents, Allison Gates and Michelle Gates, graduate students in Applied Health Sciences, gathered information and research findings as part of a graduate course, *Knowledge Mobilisation to Serve Society* (Arts 600). Science Shop staff assisted with the completion of the project. The review provided demographic data on the role of grandparents in child care, research findings on the impact of grandparent storybook reading with young children, and a survey of programs and resources for grandparents.

Michelle and Allison conclude from their research review that a program of incentives and guidance in book sharing activities between grandparents and preschoolers would be a valuable and innovative service to the Hamilton community. Based on the results of their work, and with the advice of Jack Maga, they also drafted an evidence-based proposal that can be brought to the board and stakeholders of Wesley Urban Ministries for development and possible adoption.

Allison and Michelle delivered their review and proposal at Wesley Urban Ministries. From left to right: Michelle Gates, Allison Gates, Jack Maga, Daljit Garry, Paul Johnson (Wesley Urban Ministries, Executive Director) and Derek Rauwerda (Science Shop Administrative Assistant).



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Subject: Grandparents and Storybook Reading

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4. Reason for your interest in our review of grandparents and storybook reading.

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