

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

About Strong Start®

Strong Start began in 2001 as a community project to help young children learn to read. Our programs involve working with children directly in addition to providing resources for parents and volunteers to support the development of strong literacy skills. We believe that parents are a child's first teacher and are instrumental throughout the child's life in promoting strong literacy skills.

Our Mission

We help children learn to read by providing unique programs and services through community-wide partnerships.

Our Programs

Letters, Sounds and Words™: Delivered in elementary schools, this ten-week program is for children ages 5–9. It uses short games and activities to provide repetition to help young children learn letter names, the sound each letter makes, how to read words and how to build words using the sounds of their letters.

Get Ready for School™: This literacy program is designed primarily for preschoolers ages 3–4 during the six-month period before entering Year 2 kindergarten. The program is particularly beneficial for children from low-income families and/or those learning English as an additional language. This program is delivered through partnerships with community centres.

Baby Connections®: This free community program helps families develop literacy and language skills with their babies and provides each family with a take-home kit of resources. The program has been specifically designed for parents/caring adults and young babies, 6-12 months of age. Baby Connections is delivered by program partners, including community centres, public libraries, EarlyOn centres etc.



Guiding Principles

We believe...

1. All children need to learn how to read
2. In equal opportunities for children and families
3. The early years are critically important
4. Success breeds success
5. In meaningful volunteer opportunities and the importance of community partners
6. Programs need to be research-based and evaluated using empirical data
7. Our unique, easy to administer programs do make a difference as do our high quality resources and materials
8. In the importance of the life skill of reading and healthy child development.
9. We're never done – there's always room for improvement and continuous innovation!

To learn more about Strong Start programs please visit our website.

Strategic Goals

1. Expand *Letters, Sounds and Words*™, *Get Ready for School*™ & *Baby Connections*® to multiple areas of the region, province and country

- Expand relationships with schools, school boards and community partners
- Ensure program awareness-raising strategies are included when planning for program expansion
- Continued focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for program materials, delivery and partner engagement
- Build cross-program connections to find new efficiencies, leverage know-how and develop staff

2. Secure funding to sustain current programming and fuel growth

- Develop a strategy to grow our corporate donor base
- Explore and determine optimum funding models for *Baby Connections*® and *Get Ready for School*™
- Implement Legacy/Planned Giving program to provide donors with another philanthropic option
- Look for ways to enhance stewardship of current and future donors to help inspire continuing support
- Find new and engaging ways to share impact of programming

3. Continue to develop invigorating infrastructure to enable and support scaling of programs and impact

- Implement training / registration management system for *Letters, Sounds and Words*™
- Implement an integrated inventory management system
- Identify and address logistical barriers to scaling to improve storage, warehousing, training and overall operational efficiency
- Further develop and engage the talent and passion of the Strong Start team and continue to hire to bring new skills and expertise to our growing and evolving organization

4. Significantly increase awareness of Strong Start and its programs

- Find local, provincial, and national champions to help raise awareness for literacy and Strong Start
- Leverage high-profile donors
- Pursue awards for Strong Start
- Develop a formal multimedia advertising and promotion strategy



Our Vision

All Children Read.

Our Aspiration

By 2025, Strong Start will have experienced ambitious, controlled and planned growth into communities (regionally, provincially and nationally) that have demonstrated local readiness and ownership.

Our Core Values

Relationships

Excellence

Accountability

Dynamic