



# Write to Read BC:

Supporting literacy and connection in Indigenous communities (2011-2026)

# Acknowledgements

## Land acknowledgement

We respectfully and with gratitude work on the shared, unceded Traditional Coast Salish Lands of the Squamish (Sḵw̱x̱wú7mesh), Tsleil-Waututh (səl'ílwətaʔ), Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) and Kwikwetlem (kʷikʷəłəm) Nations (in Vancouver and Burnaby respectfully) and the ǵíćəy̓ (Katzie), Kwantlen, Kwikwetlem (kʷikʷəłəm), Qayqayt, Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm), numerous Stó:lō Nations, Semiahmoo and Tsawwassen (in Surrey).

We acknowledge the sovereignty and equality of Indigenous nations and are guided by aspirations to remake Canada into a decolonial state comprised of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people who function with respect for one another. Given that the majority of higher education institutions in Canada are on unceded traditional territories of Indigenous peoples, and inequities from colonization are ongoing in Canadian society, we see community-engaged research as an actionable strategy for change that aims to make visible Indigenous ways of knowing that have traditionally been excluded across research settings and institutions.

## Co-authors

Jody Bauche & Tara Mahoney

## Project Co-Supervisor & Editorial Advisor

Gordon Yusko

## Photographs

Bob Blacker

## Graphic Design

Steven Ta

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## About Write To Read BC

Write to Read BC brings together Indigenous communities, Rotary Clubs, volunteers, suppliers, and response teams to create community-led libraries and learning spaces in rural and remote First Nations communities. Grounded in Indigenous leadership and vision, these partnerships provide books, computers, furniture, funding, and expertise to support literacy, learning, and community well-being.

**Website:** <https://writetoreadbc.org>

**Facebook:** [@writetoreadBC](#)

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# Executive Summary

Write to Read BC (W2R) is a community-driven initiative led by the Rotary Club of Steveston in partnership with Indigenous communities across British Columbia. Founded in 2009 through a collaboration between then-BC Lieutenant Governor Steven Point and Rotary leadership, the program was created to bring community-led libraries and learning spaces to rural and remote First Nations communities. Point, the first Indigenous person to serve as Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, helped champion the initiative as part of a broader commitment to education, literacy, and community empowerment. Since then, W2R has supported the development of more than 25 libraries and learning centres, improving access to books, technology, and culturally relevant learning environments.

This 2025 evaluation report, based on conversations with 19 participating communities, demonstrates that W2R has evolved far beyond a literacy initiative. While originally focused on reading and education, these spaces have become multi-purpose community hubs, supporting cultural programming, early years education, food distribution, meetings, and social connection. Communities consistently emphasized that the flexibility of the model, which allows them to define how spaces are used, has been critical to its success.

The findings in this report highlight several key areas of impact. W2R libraries strengthen community connection and belonging, providing trusted spaces where people gather across generations. They support literacy and lifelong learning, including early literacy development and the emergence of new programs inspired by these spaces. They advance Indigenous self-determination, enabling communities to design and adapt learning environments that reflect local culture, language, and priorities. Finally, they are sustained through long-term, trust-based relationships, with participants identifying relationships and responsive partnerships as central to the program's effectiveness.

At the same time, the assessment identifies important gaps and opportunities.

- Many communities face inconsistent and insufficient funding, particularly for community-based (non-school) libraries.
- There is a growing need to support youth learners, especially those engaged in online or alternative education.
- Communities also highlighted the importance of expanded physical infrastructure, as well as improved systems for knowledge continuity and information sharing in the face of staff turnover and changing leadership.

These findings point to a clear opportunity. The W2R model demonstrates that relatively modest investments in community-based infrastructure can generate wide-ranging and long-term benefits, including improved literacy, stronger community cohesion, cultural revitalization, and increased access to digital tools and learning opportunities. With sustained and targeted investment, W2R can deepen its impact in existing communities while expanding to new ones, offering a scalable, community-led approach to advancing equity, education, and well-being across underserved regions.

**This evaluation was conducted by Jody Bauche a Métis researcher with a background in community-based social work, informing a relational, community-centered approach.**

# Context

## The Challenge: Access to Literacy and Learning

Access to literacy and learning resources remains uneven across rural and remote Indigenous communities in British Columbia. In these contexts, literacy cannot be understood in isolation. Learning is shaped by interconnected factors such as food security, transportation, family support, and community wellbeing. Many communities face limited access to books, technology, and dedicated learning spaces, alongside broader systemic challenges such as geographic isolation and infrastructure gaps (First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2020).

Research highlights that these disparities are reinforced by a persistent digital divide, with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities experiencing significantly lower access to reliable internet and digital tools compared to urban populations (Abdelaal, 2022; Scott, 2024). The digital divide limits access not only to education, but also to healthcare and economic opportunities. These inequities are not only geographic, but structural, linked to historic and ongoing patterns of underinvestment and the lasting impacts of colonization on Indigenous education systems, which continue to shape access to resources and opportunities today (Gilliland et al., 2019).

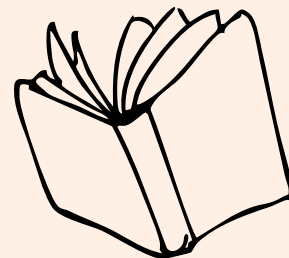
## Community-based Literacy: What the Research Says

As part of the evaluation of the Write to Read BC (W2R) program, a literature review was undertaken to situate its impact within broader research on community-based literacy. Research shows that literacy is not a standalone issue, but part of a broader “community ecology” shaped by factors such as food security, transportation, family support, and access to community spaces, particularly in Indigenous communities that are often geographically isolated. In these contexts, people often “wear many hats,” and literacy initiatives are most effective when embedded within community development efforts that advance equity, strengthen partnerships, improve accessibility, and support shared priorities (Asselin & Doiron, 2013).

In many First Nations communities, community schools operate education and literacy programs (Spencer & Rouse, 2021). In BC, 126 First Nations community schools are listed on the First Nations Schools Association (FNSA) website (FNSA, n.d.). Research shows that community involvement and culturally grounded pedagogy, rooted in local ways of knowing and being, lead to stronger student engagement and educational outcomes (Burgess, 2017).



2017-Nisaika Kumtuks



Community libraries complement this system by expanding access to learning beyond formal education. Often supported by non-profits, they respond to community-defined needs and have “generative” potential, strengthening not only individual learners but also relationships and community wellbeing (Ball, 2004). They also function as platforms for social change, supporting community engagement, social connection, and cultural resilience (Sarjeant-Jenkins & Walker, 2015).

At the same time, access to literacy resources remains uneven. School libraries face funding pressures, and reliance on external knowledge systems can marginalize local cultures (Asselin & Doiron, 2013). Unequal access to digital tools reinforces a “digital divide,” limiting participation in education and economic life (Parkin et al., 2020; Sarjeant-Jenkins & Walker, 2015). While digital access is important, communities continue to value a balance with locally grounded, culturally relevant knowledge (Parkin et al., 2020).

Indigenous-led community libraries help address these gaps by providing access to digital tools, building technical skills, and supporting employment pathways (McMahon et al., 2024). Literacy increasingly includes critical digital skills, enabling people to navigate information and participate in broader knowledge and economic systems (Riley et al., 2025; Sarjeant-Jenkins & Walker, 2015).

Research also highlights the importance of relationships and wellbeing in literacy. Community-based programs support “wholistic literacy,” connecting learning to social, emotional, and cultural life (Froehlich Chow et al., 2025). Programs that engage families strengthen literacy development and school attendance (Klieve & Fluckiger, 2015), while children learn best when literacy is modeled in everyday contexts (Ratcliffe & Boughton, 2019). Culturally responsive, relationship-based learning environments further support confidence, identity, and agency (Klieve & Fluckiger, 2015; Spencer & Rouse, 2021).

These dynamics are shaped by the ongoing impacts of colonization, including pressures toward cultural assimilation and the erosion of language and local knowledge (Parkin et al., 2020). Research underscores that when literacy initiatives are community-led and culturally grounded, participation increases and outcomes improve for children, youth, and families (Ball, 2004).

Taken together, this body of research demonstrates that community schools and libraries are not separate interventions, but interconnected parts of a broader learning ecosystem. When they are community-led, culturally grounded, and adequately resourced, they can strengthen literacy, support wellbeing, and contribute to long-term community resilience and self-determination.



2020-Volunteers in W2R Storage



# The Write to Read BC Model



## How the Model Works

The Write to Read BC (W2R) model is a community-led, partnership-based approach to improving literacy and learning in rural and remote Indigenous communities. Projects are initiated by communities and shaped by local priorities, ensuring each space reflects community needs and values. The model brings together Indigenous leadership with external partners, including Rotary Clubs, volunteers, and technical specialists, combining community knowledge with resources, expertise, and labour. The library spaces typically include books, computers, internet access, and, in many cases, purpose-built or renovated facilities. The overarching goal is not only to support literacy, but to enable communities to build and sustain their own learning environments.

## Key Stages

The model operates through **four key stages**:

1. **Community-led visioning:** Community members, including Elders and educators, define the purpose, design, and use of the space
2. **Collaborative design:** A design team works with the community to co-develop a library or learning centre concept, often including flexible and multi-use spaces
3. **Construction and coordination:** A construction team develops plans, coordinates fundraising, and manages installation with support from partners and volunteers
4. **Library setup and handover:** A library team curates books, installs technology and furnishings, and works alongside local volunteers who take on ongoing operations

The model is intentionally flexible and does not follow a single pathway. While some projects evolve from libraries into broader learning centres or community hubs this is not always the outcome, and development varies based on community priorities, capacity, and context.



## Principles

Several core principles underpin the effectiveness of the W2R model:

- **Community self-determination:** Communities decide how spaces are designed, used, and adapted over time.
- **Relationship-based approach:** Long-term, trust-based relationships between partners are central to success.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** Libraries are not fixed-purpose facilities; they evolve to meet changing community needs.
- **Cultural relevance:** Spaces and programs are shaped by local culture, language, and knowledge systems.
- **Equity in access:** The model seeks to address disparities in access to literacy resources, technology, and learning environments.

# Reach and Scale

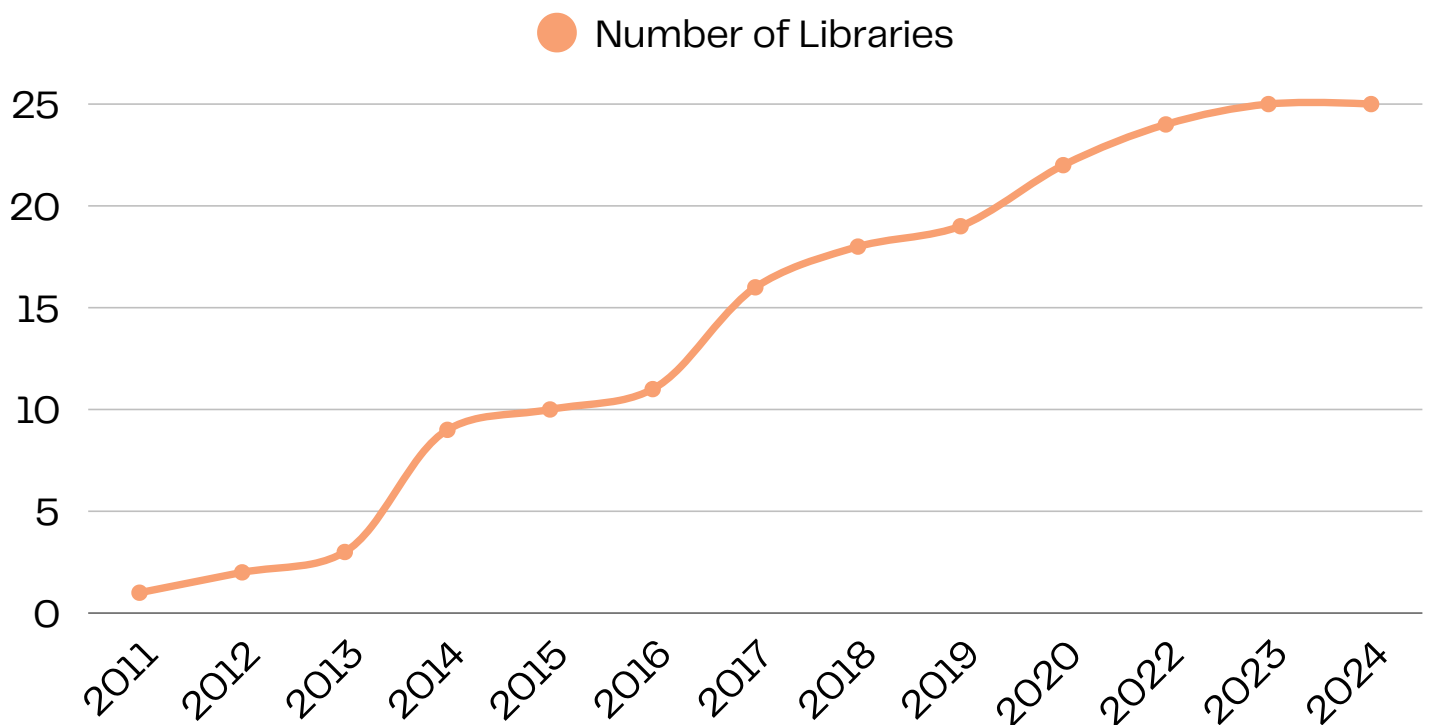
## Program Growth (2009–Present)

In 2009, a conversation between the Honourable Steven Point and Robert (Bob) Blacker of the Rotary Club of Steveston sparked the idea for Write to Read BC. Inspired by Rotary's international literacy work, they envisioned bringing similar support to rural and remote First Nations communities in British Columbia.

From the outset, the approach was collaborative: working alongside Indigenous communities to establish and sustain locally led libraries and learning centres. These spaces, equipped with books, computers, and internet access, were often created through the renovation or construction of dedicated facilities, with communities responsible for their operation.

Over the past 15+ years, Write to Read BC has grown from individual library installations into a broader network of multi-functional learning centres. This evolution reflects both sustained community demand and the flexibility of a model designed to adapt to changing needs, expanding beyond literacy to support a wide range of community-driven activities and services.

## Program Growth 2009–2024



<b>Year</b>	<b><u>Write To Read Centres</u></b>	<b>Number of Centres</b>
<b>2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tl'esqox First Nation</li> </ul>	<b>1</b>
<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yunesit'in</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>
<b>2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Massett, Haida Gwaii</li> </ul>	<b>3</b>
<b>2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halalt</li> <li>• Heiltsuk Band</li> <li>• Malahat</li> <li>• Wuikinuḡv Nation</li> <li>• Kwakiutl</li> <li>• Ditidaht</li> </ul>	<b>4 - 9</b>
<b>2015</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Metlakatla</li> </ul>	<b>10</b>
<b>2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lax Kw'alaams</li> </ul>	<b>11</b>
<b>2017</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nooaitch</li> <li>• Tsay Keh Dene</li> <li>• Quatsino</li> <li>• Ahousaht</li> <li>• Nisaika Kumtuks</li> </ul>	<b>12 - 16</b>
<b>2018</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lower Nicola Indian Band</li> <li>• T̓sideldel First Nation</li> </ul>	<b>17 - 18</b>
<b>2019</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No new installations</li> </ul>	
<b>2020</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little Chiefs Primary School - Williams Lake First Nation</li> <li>• Gitsegukla</li> <li>• Tsawwassen Youth Centre</li> </ul>	<b>19 - 21</b>
<b>2022</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aboriginal Mothers Centre</li> <li>• Xwemélch'stn Etsimxwawtxw School</li> </ul>	<b>22 - 23</b>
<b>2023</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Daylu Dena – design and construction</li> </ul>	<b>24</b>
<b>2024</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gitanmaax</li> </ul>	<b>25</b>

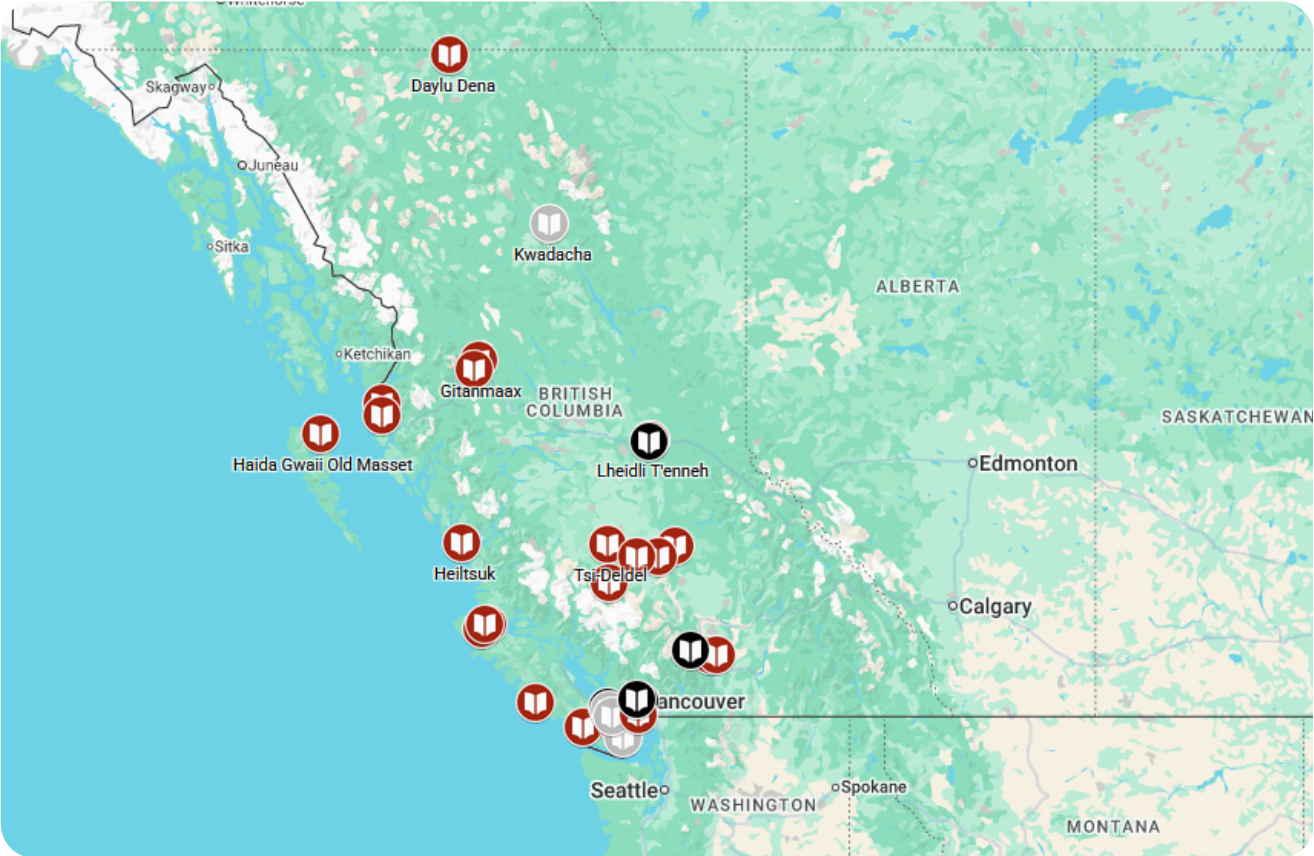
## Communities Served

Since 2009, Write to Read BC has partnered with more than **25** Indigenous communities across British Columbia to establish libraries and learning centres. This 2025 assessment engaged directly with **19** of these communities, gathering insights into how the spaces are being used and their impacts over time.

Since 2009, Write to Read BC has partnered with more than **25** Indigenous communities across British Columbia

## Geographic Scope

The program focuses on rural, remote, and underserved Indigenous communities, including those with limited access to educational infrastructure and services. These communities are often geographically isolated from urban centres, making locally accessible learning spaces particularly important for supporting literacy, education, and community development.



# Findings: What's Working

This 2025 evaluation report, based on conversations with 19 participating communities, demonstrates that W2R has evolved far beyond a literacy initiative. While originally focused on reading and education, these spaces have become multi-purpose community hubs, supporting cultural programming, early years education, food distribution, meetings, and social connection. Communities consistently emphasized that the flexibility of the model, which allows them to define how spaces are used, has been critical to its success. The following sections highlight the key themes, insights, and reflections shared by community members about the impacts, challenges, and future potential of the program.

## 1) Libraries as Community Hubs

Across participating communities, W2R libraries and learning centres have evolved into multi-purpose community hubs. While originally designed to support literacy, these spaces are now used for a wide range of activities, including cultural gatherings, early years programming, food distribution, meetings, and community outreach. Most participants emphasized that these spaces function as important gathering places, offering **connection, flexibility, and a sense of belonging**.

“The trailer is used for a variety of things beyond a library; it’s also used as a greenhouse, food bank, general meeting space, and community outreach.”



“That space gets used by community members for many things.”

“We are using the community library as a place for early years programming.”

“The community library has become a place where the community can meet, that isn’t the band office. This can be helpful if community members want to meet separately and privately.”

## 2) Advancing Literacy and Learning

W2R libraries support literacy and lifelong learning by providing access to books, technology, and community-based programming. They create opportunities for early literacy development, intergenerational learning, and ongoing engagement with education. In some communities, these spaces have also acted as a catalyst for new literacy initiatives. One participant described how their W2R library inspired the development of a program supported by Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, providing children with free books each month.

**“I have witnessed some of the children that participated in this program now become graduates of high school and in some cases, post-secondary school. I can’t help but believe that this has something to do with the literacy programs we started here.”**

Communities also emphasized the importance of maintaining low-barrier access to resources to encourage participation and ongoing engagement.

“We do our best to track when and how books are lent to community members, but we also don’t want to deter families from borrowing books if the process becomes too controlling.”



2016 – Lax Kw'alaams volunteers and heritary council

### 3) Supporting Culture and Self-Determination

A defining strength of the W2R model is its support for Indigenous self-determination. Communities shape how their libraries are used, ensuring that spaces reflect local culture, language, and priorities.

“The community made use of the library building provided for many years as a library/hub for culture and language programs.”

In some communities, these spaces have supported long-term cultural programming and are now evolving further, including plans to develop dedicated cultural centres or museums alongside existing library spaces.

“We’ve never been given anything like this before.”

### 4) Strengthening Relationships and Trust

Relationships are central to the success of W2R. In 89% of conversations, participants identified key individuals involved in the project as critical to building trust and sustaining partnerships between Indigenous communities and external collaborators.

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of having responsive, reliable partners who could support communities as needs arose.

“It was helpful to have Bob so available. Our community experienced a fire that burnt down our first library, and I just called Bob, and he helped us with a trailer right away.”

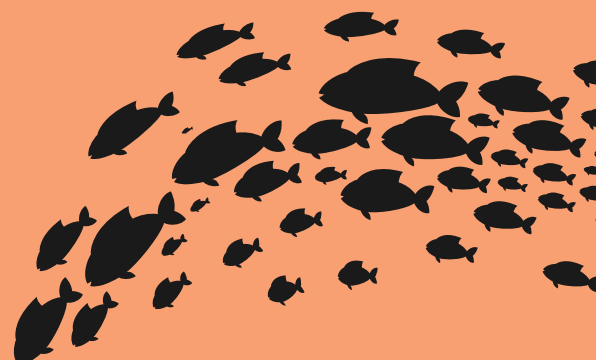
These relationships also enabled communities to expand programming and make meaningful use of available space.

“Our community really benefited from having that library trailer in our community. We don’t have a lot of options when it comes to more physical space to run programs in our community, and that library trailer really helped our programming capacity.”

Together, these examples highlight how trust-based, long-term relationships have been foundational to the effectiveness, adaptability, and sustained impact of the W2R model.



2019 - New W2R shelving units



# Community Spotlight: Aboriginal Mother Centre Society

The Aboriginal Mother Centre Society (AMC), located in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, offers a powerful example of W2R in action. Established to support Indigenous mothers and families, the Centre integrates housing, childcare, family wellness, and community programming.

Within this context, the W2R library has been transformed into a vibrant cultural and learning hub. The space supports art and creativity programs, cultural gatherings, storytelling, cooking workshops, and volunteer training grounded in cultural awareness and historical understanding.

The library coordinator has developed systems for volunteer engagement and training, helping to sustain and expand programming. This example demonstrates how W2R spaces can be locally adapted to meet complex community needs, supporting both literacy and broader social and cultural goals.



2022-The Aboriginal Mother Centre

# Gaps and Emerging Needs

## 1) Supporting Youth and Future Learners

Communities identified a growing need to better support youth, particularly those engaged in online or alternative education models. Some participants noted that dedicated spaces for youth learning would enhance educational outcomes and provide structured environments for study and connection.

Many First Nations youth living on reserve access education through a mix of in-community, distance, and alternative programs, often due to limited local access to full K–12 schooling and broader infrastructure constraints. In some communities, students must rely on online or adapted learning models where local schools or in-person options are not available (Statistics Canada, 2023). One community leader recommended “that a designated space for these learners would be a helpful addition to their community”.

## 2) Sustaining Community-Based Libraries

Sustained funding for community-based libraries remains inconsistent. While some literacy funding exists, it is often limited, competitive, or tied to school-based programs, creating challenges for maintaining community libraries that serve a broader population.

While some communities reported stable access to literacy funding, others described increasing challenges, reflecting disparities based on community size and shifting funding models over time.

“There isn’t funding for community libraries; there is funding for libraries attached to schools, but not necessarily for community-specific libraries.”

“Funding for literacy initiatives on the Island is becoming challenging... for 30 years this funding has been consistent, but recently the government changed the funding applications, making it competitively reviewed.”

These shifts create uncertainty and make it more difficult for communities to sustain long-term, community-based programming. Communities emphasized the importance of ongoing operational support to ensure these spaces remain active and accessible. Without sustained investment, there is a risk that the long-term benefits of these community-led initiatives may not be fully realized.

**There isn’t funding for community libraries; there is funding for libraries attached to schools, but not necessarily for community-specific libraries.”**

### 3) Infrastructure and Space Needs

Many communities highlighted the need for additional or improved physical infrastructure. Limited space can constrain programming and reduce the ability to expand services.

W2R libraries have helped address this gap by providing much-needed physical space for community use. In many cases, these spaces have enabled communities to expand programming, host gatherings, and support local priorities. However, demand continues to grow, underscoring the importance of investing in physical infrastructure as a foundation for community development.

### 4) Knowledge Continuity and Capacity

In some communities, staff turnover has resulted in gaps in knowledge about the origins and purpose of W2R libraries. This has, at times, affected how spaces are used or understood.

Participants noted that changes in leadership and administration over time have made it difficult to track the history and evolution of the project within communities.

“Oh, that’s where that building came from.”

In other cases, community members indicated that spaces had been repurposed, reflecting both evolving needs and gaps in project continuity.

“We don’t use the community library anymore, it’s being used as something else—is that ok?”

While these shifts highlight challenges in maintaining institutional memory, they also reflect the flexibility of the model and the ability of communities to adapt spaces to meet changing priorities. Strengthening systems for knowledge sharing and continuity could help maintain momentum, support long-term impact, and enable learning across communities.

**We don’t use the community library anymore, it’s being used as something else—is that ok?”**



2012 - Opening of the Yenesit'in library

# What We've Learned

## The Importance of Relationships and Trust

Strong, consistent relationships are foundational to success. Trust built over time enables collaboration, responsiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Participants consistently emphasized that trust was built through ongoing relationships with key individuals involved in the W2R project. These relationships created the conditions for meaningful engagement and knowledge sharing, often through storytelling and lived experience.

## The Role of Indigenous Leadership

Indigenous leadership plays a critical role in guiding projects, building trust, and ensuring cultural relevance. The involvement of respected leaders was identified as a key factor in early project success and ongoing engagement.

Participants frequently referenced the importance of having an Indigenous champion in the early stages of the project, reinforcing the value of leadership that is grounded in community relationships and lived experience.

## Flexibility and Community Ownership

The ability for communities to define how spaces are used has been essential. This flexibility allows libraries to evolve in response to changing needs and ensures strong local ownership.

This community-driven approach has enabled libraries to take on multiple roles—from literacy spaces to cultural hubs, demonstrating the value of models that prioritize local decision-making and adaptability.

## The Value of In-Person Engagement

While this evaluation relied largely on remote engagement, findings suggest that in-person relationships are critical for building deeper connections and gathering richer insights.

Trust and meaningful engagement are often strengthened through time spent within communities. Future work would benefit from increased in-person engagement to support relationship-building and deepen understanding of community needs.



# Opportunities for Investment

The Write to Read BC experience demonstrates that relatively modest investments in community-based infrastructure can generate wide-ranging and long-term benefits. Community libraries and learning centres can act as catalysts for:

- **Improved literacy and educational engagement**
- **Increased community participation and cohesion**
- **Cultural revitalization and language preservation**
- **Enhanced access to digital tools and information**
- **Expanded local programming and services**

Because these spaces are flexible and community-driven, their impact often extends beyond initial expectations by supporting new programs, partnerships, and forms of learning that evolve over time.

This creates a significant opportunity: with sustained and targeted investment, community-based learning infrastructure can serve as a foundation for broader social, educational, and economic outcomes in underserved communities.



2014 - Opening at Dididhat

# Conclusion: A Model Worth Scaling

Write to Read BC demonstrates that community-based, relationship-driven approaches to literacy and learning can generate broad and lasting impact.

By combining infrastructure with trust-based partnerships and community ownership, the program has supported not only literacy, but also cultural resilience, social connection, and community development.

With continued investment, W2R offers a scalable model for supporting equitable access to learning and strengthening community wellbeing across underserved regions.

## Donate to Write To Read BC



<https://donorbox.org/indigenous-led-libraries-and-learning-centres-927572>

## Visit the website



<https://writetoreadbc.org/>



# Appendices

## A. Methodology

This assessment was conducted in 2025 as a community-engaged evaluation of the Write to Read BC (W2R) program, led by Simon Fraser University's Community-Engaged Research Initiative in partnership with the Rotary Club of Steveston.

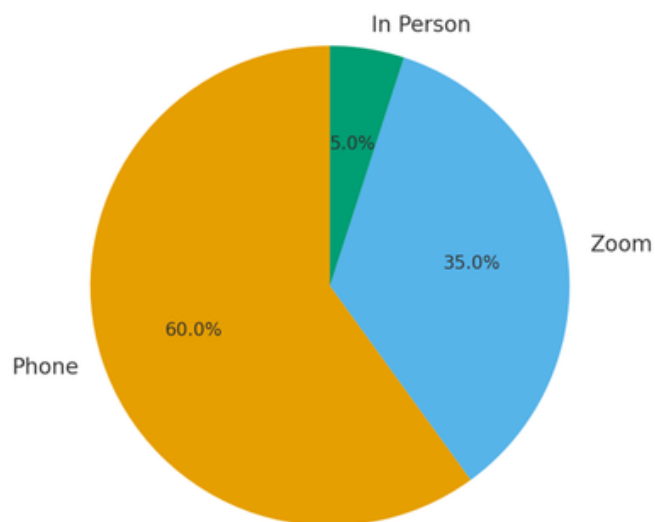
The approach prioritized relationship-based and story-driven methods, recognizing the importance of lived experience and Indigenous knowledge systems. Rather than relying on formal surveys or quantitative metrics, the evaluation focused on gathering insights through conversations with participating communities.

Engagement included:

- Phone interviews
- Zoom conversations
- Select in-person visits to W2R sites

A total of 19 communities participated in the assessment. Conversations were guided by open-ended questions designed to explore how libraries and learning centres have been used over time, who uses them, and their broader impacts on community life.

Survey Methods Across Communities



Information gathered through these conversations was reviewed and organized into key themes through an informal coding process. This involved identifying recurring ideas, experiences, and patterns across community responses.

This approach reflects a commitment to ethical, community-centered research practices, including respect for Indigenous data sovereignty and the recognition that stories are a valid and meaningful form of knowledge.

## Limitations

There were moderate challenges in gathering information across participating communities. In some cases, individuals were unable to recall details about the W2R project or identify appropriate contacts, reflecting broader patterns of staff turnover, changing leadership, and the long-term evolution of many projects. Variability in available documentation and historical records also made it difficult to consistently trace the development, timelines, and impacts of specific W2R initiatives.

Efforts to follow up with suggested contacts were not always successful. To avoid placing undue burden on communities, outreach was conducted in two phases with time allocated between contact attempts. In some instances, this approach did not result in additional participation. As many communities are navigating multiple ongoing social, economic, infrastructure, and staffing pressures, participation in evaluation activities may not always have been a priority. As a result, the findings primarily reflect the perspectives of individuals who were available and willing to participate, meaning some community experiences and viewpoints may not be fully represented.

This evaluation was conducted primarily through phone and virtual engagement. It is possible that in-person engagement would have supported deeper participation and more comprehensive insights, as relationship-building is often strengthened through direct, on-the-ground interaction. Time and resource constraints also limited opportunities for extended site visits and participatory activities that may have generated richer community-led reflections and storytelling.

While surveys were initially considered, the evaluation instead prioritized story-based methods, gathering insights through community members' experiences and reflections. As a result, this report does not include quantitative measures of literacy outcomes across communities. Instead, findings are grounded in personal stories and lived experience, reflecting an approach that values relational, community-centered knowledge and aligns with ethical practices in Indigenous research.

Given the diversity of participating communities, including differences in geography, infrastructure, population size, and local priorities, findings cannot always be generalized across all W2R sites. The evaluation therefore captures a snapshot in time and may not fully reflect the long-term and evolving role of W2R spaces within communities.

### **B.1: Author Positionality – Jody Bauche**

In February 2025, I was engaged by Simon Fraser University's Community-Engaged Research Initiative to conduct an evaluation of the Write to Read BC project in partnership with the Rotary Club of Steveston. As an Indigenous graduate student and a citizen of the Métis Nation of British Columbia, I approached this work with a personal and professional commitment to community development and well-being.

My perspective is informed by years of experience as a community-based social worker, where I witnessed firsthand the effort and care that rural and remote First Nations communities invest in early learning and literacy programming. This background shaped a research approach grounded in respect, relationship-building, and the value of community knowledge.

## **B.2: Author Positionality – Tara Mahoney**

As a white settler scholar, my professional background spans community-engaged research, communication and public engagement with a focus on supporting partnerships between universities, non-profit organizations, Indigenous communities, and community groups responding to social, cultural, and environmental priorities. In community-engaged projects, my aim is to support processes that value lived and living experience alongside academic expertise; enable plain-language and creative forms of knowledge sharing; and remain attentive to the ethical tensions, limitations, and power dynamics that emerge within partnership-based work.

## **C: Research Ethics**

This project was conducted as an evaluative study and followed university protocols and ethical guidelines for program evaluation involving human participants. In alignment with these requirements—and the sensitive nature of working with Indigenous data and community knowledge—data collection was limited to conversations with participating communities and the Rotary Club of Steveston.

## **D. Interview Questions**

The following questions were used to guide conversations with participating communities. They were designed to support open dialogue and allow participants to share their experiences in their own words:

1. How long has the W2R library been in your community?
2. How has the W2R library brought your community together?
3. How is the W2R library being used currently?
4. Who uses the library the most? (e.g., children, youth, adults, Elders)
5. Do families attend together? Is the space used intergenerationally?
6. What types of learning materials are available (e.g., books, computers, internet)?
7. Which materials are most frequently used?
8. Have the libraries contributed to community well-being? If so, how?
9. Have they influenced school attendance or engagement in learning?
10. How are culture, language, or local traditions reflected in the space?
11. What would you like to improve or expand in the future?

## **E. Selected web content about the Write to Read BC project:**

- <https://bclaconnect.ca/perspectives/2020/11/30/write-to-read-project/>
- <https://rotary5040.org/stories/bc-s-write-2-read-program-brings-education-literacy-rotary-focus-to-first-nation-communities>
- <https://rotary5040.org/stories/bc-s-write-2-read-program-brings-education-literacy-rotary-focus-to-first-nation-communities>
- <https://portal.clubrunner.ca/772/sitepage/projects/write-to-read>
- <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/first-nations-in-b-c-gain-libraries-thanks-to-judge-ex-officer-1.2654846>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-e2ksFyKa7o>
- <https://www.rotary.org/en/literacy-project-brings-hope-british-columbia>
- <https://writetoreadbc.org/the-libraries/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/writetoreadBC/>

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## About Write To Read BC

Write to Read BC brings together Indigenous communities, Rotary Clubs, volunteers, suppliers, and response teams to create community-led libraries and learning spaces in rural and remote First Nations communities. Grounded in Indigenous leadership and vision, these partnerships provide books, computers, furniture, funding, and expertise to support literacy, learning, and community well-being.



**Website:** <https://writetoreadbc.org>

**Facebook:** [@writetoreadBC](#)