

44 ways for parents to **MOTIVATE** their children to succeed in FSL programs

Cher Harvey is an associate professor of French-second-language methodology in the Faculty of Education at Nipissing University, Ontario where she shares her passion for teaching French with her students.

—By Cher Harvey



1. Be a member of CPF!

2. Buy the book *French Immersion, Yes, You Can Help!* Revised Edition. Alberta Education. This is an inexpensive (\$6.90) but very informative book for parents with children in the core, extended or immersion programs. Visit www.lrc.learning.gov.ab.ca or phone 780-427-2767.

3. Let your children know you value the learning of French for many reasons: it is one of Canada's official languages, develops cognitive growth, and offers a better understanding of your first language, cultural richness, increased job and travel opportunities, and the opportunity to meet new friends.

4. Try listening to French radio in your home or in the car.

5. Let your children know that you care about their progress in school and that you are proud of their ability to speak French.

6. Create open, regular lines of communication with your children's teachers.

7. Celebrate success! Hang up artwork and projects. Celebrate great test results.

8. Encourage family members to talk about and show pictures of their experiences or travels to Francophone communities and countries.

9. If you have any French relatives, have your children make greeting cards in French.

10. Encourage good study habits. Organize a time and a place to do homework – have a box of pencils and markers on hand and designate a shelf where your children put their homework as soon as they come home from school.

11. Post notes from the teacher, permission slips and other important school messages on a bulletin board.

12. Take your children to francophone or bilingual concerts, theatre performances, story-telling events, puppet shows, and folk dancing concerts.

13. Perhaps your CPF Chapter or child's class would be interested in organizing a French club for kids for one hour a week.

14. Your CPF Chapter or child's French teacher could organize French contests such as "Counting Contest" or "Win a Trip to France Contest." Contact Cher Harvey for more information: cherh@nipissingu.ca.

15. All kids like food! Suggest to your Chapter or school the fun of organizing a French Canadian celebration around food. Consider a *soupe aux pois* luncheon where everyone eats soup and French bread at lunch time. Other possibilities include a French Canadian potluck luncheon with French recipes; a *Journée des Crêpes* or a *Croissant et Café au Lait* day for older students.

16. Celebrate French festivals at home with special meals or decorations. Make *la tire* to celebrate *La fête de la Sainte Catharine* on November 25. Serve *la tourtière* and *une bûche de Noël* cake at Christmas. Celebrate *La Fête des Rois* on January 6 by serving a cake with a jelly bean inside. The person who gets the bean becomes *Le Roi* or *La Reine* for the day and wears a crown! Decorate your home for *Bonhomme Carnaval* in mid February.

17. If you have a Francophone community near you, take the kids to visit it. Take advantage of any francophone festivals in your area.

Continued next page

From page 12

18. Play games in French. Check your local stores for French board games such as Scrabble in French, Speak'n'Spell, Taboo and Monopolie, or order them from on-line stores or mail order venues.

19. Learn some French songs. Sing with your children! Play French CDs at home. There are many excellent artists like Jacquot, Matt Maxwell, Gregg LeRock, Étienne, Charlotte Diamond, Carmen Campagne, Annie Brocoli, Suzanne Pinel, etc.

20. Have your Chapter promote French in the home by organizing a group purchase of the *Rockin' CD of Music* created by Sound Language Solutions. Each song targets one of the most frequent errors made by students learning French. The CD is sold at a fraction of the regular price (\$7.00) for organizations that promote French, see www.soundlanguagesolutions.com.

21. Encourage your children to dance to the music and put on shows for you. It will help them remember the songs.

22. Organize Chapter prizes such as dictionaries, French books or monetary prizes to present to deserving students at the end of the year or at graduations.

23. Make use of the computer. Set-up a French search engine. Google in French can be found at www.google.com/intl/fr/.

24. Introduce your children to the works of francophone artists. Libraries are good resources – leave the books on the coffee table.

25. Consider penpals from French-speaking countries. Good web-sites are www.iys.fi and www.franceworld.com.

26. Help teachers organize exchanges for students to visit Quebec, France or a French-speaking country. A good resource is SEVEC – www.exchanges.sevec.ca.

27. Check out summer camps – day Camps, residential camps and even family camps! Check the CPF web site or Francophone Associations near you.

28. Encourage your child to participate in the *Concours d'art oratoire*, CPF's French public speaking contest.

29. Dine in a French restaurant. Ask your children to help you order in French!

30. Take advantage of free resources: Canada flag pins are available from your member of parliament. Free bookmarks are available from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, www.cic.gc.ca. Free posters are available from the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, www.ocol-clo.ca. Check out the free resources for secondary students as well.

31. Visit educational websites that are grade appropriate and have interesting activities in French: (1) CPF www.cpf.ca; (2) Department of Canadian Heritage www.canadianheritage.gc.ca; (3) National Library of Canada www.nlc-bnc.ca/kids/index-e.html.

32. Purchase French computer software such as *French Your Way* or *French for Success!* – approximately \$50.

33. Use the Internet and do a search to find music of popular Francophone singers.

34. See if you can rent a video by the award winning cinematographer Frédéric Bach: *Crac!* for all ages or *Le fleuve aux grandes eaux* and *L'homme qui plantait des arbres* for older students.

35. Encourage students to explore career options for bilingual students. An excellent free resource is *Destination 2020* available in English or French from the Canadian Career Consortium info@carriereccc.org

36. Encourage children to start a scrapbook or collection of "something French"— French cassettes or CDs, stamps, money, postcards, pictures, fashion ideas, hockey cards of French players, French soccer players, French recipes, Eiffel Tower, etc.

37. If your children take piano or ballet lessons, encourage them to learn using French music.

38. Volunteer in the classroom. Parents can listen to students count, read, sing or tell stories in French. You can help with bulletin boards and fund-raising for the French programs. Help with luncheons, chaperone excursions, and talk about your experiences and trips to Francophone countries.

39. If your community organizes a fall fair, a winter festival, a Christmas walk or parade, suggest your child's class sing or perform in French.

40. Help children study for *dictées* and French tests.

41. Take your children and friends to sing French Christmas carols in your neighbourhood or in a seniors' home.

42. Visit the library to find French books, CDs and videos or use their inter-library service.

43. If your Chapter funds a Francophone entertainer for the students, be sure to invite the local newspaper and highlight the event.

44. Students – consider being French teachers, it's an exciting and rewarding career!