



Legal Services Society

Public Legal Education and Information Resources

Accessibility Initiative

June 2012



**Legal
Services
Society**

British Columbia
www.legalaid.bc.ca

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Executive summary

Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) resources must be accessible: useable, easy to navigate, and available to a broad range of users with differing capabilities. Legal Services Society (LSS) is committed to providing valuable, high-quality PLEI resources that are also accessible.

In British Columbia, limited literacy remains a significant barrier to understanding and using legal information. Functional literacy – the ability to understand and apply information to solve problems in daily life – varies significantly among individuals and across regions of the province¹. In rural, remote, and Aboriginal communities, limited computer literacy (and access to computers and high-speed Internet) is often cited as an added barrier in a web-based world.

At the same time, the use of technology is growing exponentially. People are using mobile devices to find information on LSS websites. Rural, remote, and Aboriginal communities around the province are getting access to the Web through high-speed Internet. Aboriginal people, especially youth, are using social media to keep in touch. While there are still barriers to access, the situation is not static. Technology is changing how people find and use information.

In early 2012, we retained outside consultants to assess the barriers and make recommendations to improve public access to our PLEI resources. The new Family Law Act and other legislation require extensive revisions to our PLEI resources in 2012/2013. The timing is right. We have an opportunity to make immediate use of their recommendations.

The Community and Publishing Services (CPS) department led the accessibility initiative. CPS contracted three consultants with expertise in literacy, website navigability, and Aboriginal online needs — Decoda Literacy Solutions, Habañero Consulting Group, and Sa’hetxw Consulting — to conduct independent reviews. This comprehensive report brings together their findings and recommendations.

The PLEI review started with our print publications and web materials. It extended to how we communicate our PLEI information in person, over the phone, and on the Internet to intermediaries, including advocates and other community workers, people seeking legal advice or a lawyer to represent them, and other British Columbians with low incomes who are accessing PLEI resources directly.

Our general goal is to make our PLEI resources as useful as possible for all British Columbians, by providing them with information to help them understand their legal issue, navigate the justice system, and obtain early and fair results for their cases. We had three specific objectives in undertaking the review:

- Improve PLEI resources to address varying levels of literacy.
- Improve the user experience on the Family Law in BC website.
- Develop an Aboriginal online strategy.

These objectives will be individually addressed through the consultants’ recommendations.

¹ Canadian Council on Learning – Mapping Literacy: ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Topic/Literacy/index.html

Decoda Literacy Solutions

Decoda Literacy Solutions completed a literacy review of the services provided to LSS clients and users of our PLEI materials, including intermediaries, LSS staff and clients, and the general public.

Decoda's objectives were to:

- Review and assess whether PLEI materials are at an appropriate literacy level for the intended audiences.
- Provide recommendations to improve access to and communication of PLEI that will meet the literacy needs of as many users as possible.
- Raise literacy awareness among LSS staff, local agents, and community partners.

They assessed how well our PLEI resources address the needs of the users, particularly audiences with low levels of literacy. Literacy is more than basic reading and writing skills. It includes the ability to understand what is read, and to take steps based on the information.

Decoda reviewed a selection of print and online materials, looking at:

- language,
- organization and flow of information, and
- layout and design of materials.

They also reviewed how this information is communicated to the users and clients — in person, by telephone, and on the Internet — through staff (frontline and community outreach), local agents, and community partners. The scope and objectives of the location visits where they observed intake interviews were to provide recommendations that would:

- Enhance communications with clients with low literacy at intake
- Enhance communications in general and PLEI materials for user groups
- Ensure legal aid office and courthouse locations are literacy friendly for all client groups

Habañero Consulting Group

Habañero assessed the usability of the Family Law in BC website (FLWS), the most used family law resource in BC with an average of 31,000 visits per month in 2011/2012. They conducted the following research activities, designed to determine how a complex site like the FLWS could become more user-friendly:

- stakeholder interviews
- listening labs conducted with intermediaries, clients, and the general public
- online surveys
- review of Google Analytics (web traffic patterns)
- a general review of the FLWS

Sa'hetxw Consulting

Sa'hetxw Consulting reviewed the Aboriginal section of the LSS website, our social media content, and our current social media strategy documents to determine how we can more effectively engage with

Aboriginal people online. Sa’hetxw Consulting will work with us to develop an Aboriginal online strategy that will include exploring multimedia opportunities.

PLEI resources reviewed

The consultants reviewed LSS print publications, online content, and intake locations to assess readability, usability, and accessibility. Each one focused on specific PLEI resources, as outlined below.

Print publications

Decoda reviewed the following nine print publications:

Booklets

- *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights*
- *Parents’ Rights, Kids’ Rights*
- *Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial*
- *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*
- *Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process*
- *Your Welfare Rights*

Brochure

- *If Your Child is Taken*

Fact sheets

- *Are You Aboriginal?*
- *Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning*

Online content

Family Law in BC website (FLWS)

- Habañero assessed overall usability of the website.
- Decoda reviewed five pages to assess readability.

LSS website

Aboriginal section

- Sa’hetxw reviewed this section of the LSS website, focusing on key areas to increase awareness and usability.

Do I qualify for legal representation?

- Decoda reviewed this web page located in the Legal aid section.

Social media

- Sa’hetxw reviewed LSS Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube content.

Intake locations

Decoda visited several intake locations to assess the accessibility and communication of PLEI. They observed office environments, including signage and publication displays, and intake interviews, where information is communicated to clients and the public. The following locations were visited:

- Main Street courthouse (Vancouver)
- Surrey courthouse
- Surrey legal aid office
- Vancouver intake clinic

General findings

General observations about the accessibility of print materials and web content, and the communication of information to clients at intake locations are summarized below.

Print materials

Language

Decoda discovered various examples of good practice that can lead to high readability. They observed many of the guidelines related to clear language, such as:

- use of language that is familiar to readers
- addressing readers directly
- use of the active voice
- logical ordering and integration of the information

They reported, however, a number of readability issues that make some materials difficult for people with low literacy to read. Such issues include:

- overall reading level is too high
- sentences are long and complex
- paragraphs have too many sentences and topics
- definitions of legal vocabulary are not in plain language
- difficult vocabulary is not defined
- some words may be difficult for clients with English as a second language
- dense blocks of text make reading difficult
- long lines of text make reading difficult
- graphics to reinforce or replace written information are lacking

Layout and design

Decoda identified many clear design guidelines that help readers find their way around the page, including:

- left-justified type

- no hyphenation at the ends of lines
- no underlined text
- appropriate fonts for headings and body type
- use of headings and sub-headings to help readers find key information

A number of the publications reviewed, however, have design issues that directly affect readability for readers with low literacy, such as:

- dense blocks of text that can discourage readers
- lines of text that are too long and hard to track

Online content

Family Law in BC website

Habañero's research activities indicated that community workers and intermediaries, who are often familiar with the FLWS, find the website extremely valuable due to its comprehensive content and easy-to-understand language.

If a person is not familiar with the LSS website or FLWS at the time of searching, however, it is difficult for them to distinguish the FLWS among other for-profit or less reliable sites in the search results.

Habañero also reported that members of the general public who are not familiar with FLWS content find it challenging to:

- scan information to identify what is relevant to them, and
- navigate through the volume of dense information without being overwhelmed.

Aboriginal section of the LSS website

Sa'hetxw found the legal issues medicine wheel concept easy to follow visually, with straightforward navigation. But as a whole, the content was found to be text heavy, with some information difficult to find. The report concluded that the Aboriginal Web section isn't client-focused but geared towards intermediaries helping clients. This Web section would be difficult to navigate by someone who has limited Internet experience.

Social media

Sa'hetxw reported that the LSS Facebook page most likely doesn't attract many Aboriginal people because it contains only some Aboriginal-related content. For LSS Twitter content, the current target audience is diverse. It does not specifically target Aboriginal people. Since LSS Aboriginal-related social media content is distributed through multiple online tools (Twitter, Facebook, and the blog), it would be easier to find if it was grouped and directly accessible from the Aboriginal landing page on the LSS website.

Intake locations

After completing their site visits, Decoda reported that:

- Overall, there is good signage to direct walk-in clients to intake offices.

- Publication displays need to be better organized.
- In the smaller offices at the courthouses, there aren't any publication displays in the waiting areas.
- Bulletin boards in the waiting areas could be better utilized.

Summary of recommendations

As a result of their findings, the consultants made recommendations that will help to make our PLEI resources more accessible to our unique audiences. We are already following several of the recommendations. Some can be worked on immediately by the Community and Publishing Services department, while others will require strategic planning as they involve collaboration between LSS departments. We will develop a work plan to implement key recommendations over the next few years.

Decoda Literacy Solutions

Decoda made 12 recommendations, including:

- Define literacy for use in LSS policy, materials, and procedures.
- Develop a standard process to quickly identify clients with low literacy.
- Develop relationships with the province-wide network of literacy outreach coordinators and organizations.
- Re-script the LSS Call Centre telephone messages for clear language, organization, content, and pacing.
- Simplify and reduce the length of intake documentation for clients.
- Implement a five-step process to review PLEI resources.

For a detailed list of all Decoda recommendations, see the table on pages 15 – 17 of their report.

Habañero Consulting Group

Habañero's report contained 18 major recommendations and a list of minor recommendations to help make the FLWS easier to navigate and more accessible to a broader range of users. Major recommendations include:

- Organize navigation around key areas of information.
- Use headings and categories that help people identify relevant information more easily.
- Avoid duplication of similar information.
- Reduce the amount of information on each page.
- Utilize more white space to support scanning and readability.
- Use a larger default font.
- Create a homepage and global navigation that ensures people can easily see the following:
 - the website is official, can be trusted, and is non-profit,
 - court forms,

- language options,
- users can do things themselves,
- services and people who can help them, and
- links to information for their topic.

To review these detailed lists, see pages 20 – 24 of their report.

Sa’hetxw Consulting

Sa’hetxw presented 18 recommendations that focus on ways to meet the needs of an emerging Aboriginal audience, while recognizing the barriers that continue to exist.

The following list summarizes their recommendations:

- Increase collaboration to develop LSS online strategies and to market Aboriginal online resources.
- Partner with local agencies to improve access to LSS online content and develop more multimedia opportunities.
- Use the Aboriginal section of the LSS website as an assembly place for all related online content and improve the flow of information by streamlining navigation and adding more visuals.
- Create more Aboriginal-related social media content.
- Explore new ways to deliver information about our services, such as videoconferencing sessions.
- Provide training for staff to increase their ability to develop and use social media.

For the complete list of their recommendations, see the table on pages 1 – 3 of their report.

Introduction

Decoda Literacy Solutions, Habañero Consulting Group, and Sa'hetxw Consulting were contracted by the Community and Publishing Services Department to review the accessibility of Legal Services Society Public Legal Education and Information resources. Their reports, which outline their review activities and present their findings and recommendations, are included in this section.

Literacy Review for the Legal Services Society

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May 18, 2012

Decoda
LITERACY SOLUTIONS

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Introduction

Decoda Literacy Solutions has completed a literacy review of the services provided to Legal Services Society (LSS) clients and users of the Public Legal Education and Information (PLEI) materials, including publications, promotional materials, and websites. In the review process, Decoda assessed how this information is communicated to the users and clients, in person, by telephone and on the Internet, through staff (frontline and community outreach), local agents, and community partners.

The objectives of the literacy review were as follows:

- Establish whether PLEI materials are at an appropriate literacy level for the intended audiences.
- Provide recommendations to improve access to and communication of PLEI that will meet the literacy needs of as many users as possible.
- Raise literacy awareness among LSS staff, local agents, and community partners.

The following document is a final report of the processes taken to conduct the review; our observations and findings; and our recommendations to improve readability, improve access to communication, and to raise awareness amongst LSS staff and others. It contains three parts.

Part 1: Assessment of readability levels with recommendations. A detailed analysis of each publication and web page reviewed can be found in Appendices B and D.

Part 2: Assessment of communication at intake interviews and accessibility of information at intake locations, including detailed recommendations. General overview of all sites observed using Literacy Audit Toolkit best practice statements can be found in Appendix E.

Part 3: Proposed training plan, including five modules and accompanying learning materials.

Part 1: Assessment of readability levels of PLEI materials

Scope and objectives

The objective of Part 1 was to assess readability levels of a variety of PLEI materials and provide recommendations to improve readability for target audiences defined by the Legal Services Society (LSS). These include intermediaries, advocates, LSS intake staff, settlement workers, LSS clients, as well as the general public.

LSS selected the following 15 materials for review:

Nine printed PLEI materials

- *Surviving Relationships Violence and Abuse* (booklet)
- *Representing Yourself in Criminal Trial* (booklet)
- *Parents' Rights, Kids' Rights* (booklet)
- *Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning* (fact sheet)
- *If Your Child is Taken* (fact sheet)
- *Are You Aboriginal?* (fact sheet)
- *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights* (guide)
- *Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process* (booklet)
- *Your Welfare Rights* (booklet)

Five web pages from the LSS Family Law in BC website

- How to do your own undefended divorce (sole application) in Supreme Court (self-help guide)
- How to change a final family order in Supreme Court if you and the other party can't agree (self-help guide)
- Child support (FAQs)
- Checklist of information to include in an affidavit (fact sheet)
- Legal terminology commonly used (definitions)

One web page from the LSS website

- Do I qualify for legal representation? (financial qualification guidelines)

Approach taken to assess readability

In order to identify possible barriers for people with low literacy when accessing LSS publications, we looked at three factors that affect readability: language; organization and flow of information; and layout and design. We asked a series of general questions.

Language

- Is the tone conversational and friendly?
- Are the sentences simple and relatively short?
- Are unfamiliar and abstract words kept to a minimum?
- Are technical terms defined clearly and in simple language?

Organization and flow of information

- Is the most important information first?
- Does the introduction explain the content?
- Do heading and sub-headings guide the reader?
- Can the reader find information quickly and easily?

Layout and design

- Are the headings descriptive?
- Is the text broken into short sections?
- Are the fonts easy to read?
- Is there enough white space?

Using the general questions as a starting point, we developed a more comprehensive checklist tailored specifically for use in evaluating the LSS materials. The checklists incorporate some of the guidelines from the LSS Style Guide, Decoda Literacy Solutions' in-house Clear Material Guidelines, and Joan Acosta's Clear Language and Design (CLAD) checklist. Sample checklists can be found in Appendix A.

The Flesch Reading Ease Test

In addition to the checklist evaluation, the Flesch Reading Ease Test (FRET) was applied to one sample of text in all nine publications and six web pages in order to provide a rough estimate of the difficulty of the material. As with all readability formulas, this test measures only surface characteristics such as the number of sentences, words, and syllables in a sample text. It doesn't include important factors that affect readability, such as the difficulty of the vocabulary or the comprehensibility of the text.

The FRET rates texts on a 100-point scale. The higher the score, the easier it is to understand the text.

90 - 100:	Very Easy
80 - 89:	Easy
70 - 79:	Fairly Easy
60 - 69:	Standard
50 - 59:	Fairly Difficult
30 - 49:	Difficult
0 - 29:	Very Confusing

For more information, about the FRET also known as Flesch Reading Ease Score, see page 31.

For the publications tested, the results on the FRET showed a range between 43.4 (difficult) for *Your Welfare Rights* and 70.5 (fairly easy) for *Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial*.

For the web pages tested, the results on the FRET showed a range between 43.5 (difficult) for *Do I qualify for legal representation?* and 77.1 (fairly easy) for *FAQs: Child Support*.

Although the FRET has limitations, a score below the 60 to 69 range should signal that the text needs be reviewed to find out if there are ways to make it easier to read.

Good readers and weak readers

The following chart helps to identify the differences in the ways that good readers and weak readers engage in reading. It is important to note that good readers have a variety of strategies and use a series of skills to help them understand and retain what they read. In addition to the abundance of strategies, good readers tend to have more background knowledge which also helps them to critically assess material they are reading.

By contrast, weak readers have limited strategies and skills. This deeply impacts their ability to not only complete a reading exercise, but also to retain and act upon what they've read. Additionally, because reading is such a challenging and largely unsatisfying experience, weak readers don't read as often as good readers. So they don't practice their reading skills and they miss the opportunity to build background knowledge from printed sources.

The following chart shows the parallel skills (or lack thereof) between good and weak readers. Blank boxes in columns indicate where there is a lack of parallel skills between the two groups.

What do good readers do?	What do weak readers do?
Good readers are strategic readers. They use a number of comprehension strategies to get meaning from text.	Weak readers begin reading without setting goals. They don't consider the purpose and the strategy they need to use.
They set goals for their reading. They look at the structure of the text and the organization and decide how they are going to read it. They decide if they need to read it word-for-word or skim to find the relevant information.	They often don't know how to skim a piece of text for specific information. They don't know how to scan to get a general idea of the topic.
They read words accurately and deal with the meaning of the words at the same time.	Weak readers don't have good decoding skills, which makes it difficult for them to read individual words.
	They read slowly and labour over every word. If a sentence is long, they often have difficulty remembering the beginning of the sentence by the time they reach the end.
	If they are unfamiliar with the vocabulary, they have no strategies to figure out the meaning of words from context.
They connect the meaning of one sentence with the meaning of other sentences in the text.	They have trouble connecting the ideas in one sentence to the ideas in other sentences, or the ideas in one paragraph with another paragraph.
If they are confused or unsure about what they are reading, they use their background knowledge to figure out the meaning.	They may not have sufficient background knowledge to figure out meaning or make predictions.
They use background knowledge to make predictions about what might happen next. As they read, they evaluate their predictions and make adjustments.	

What do good readers do?	What do weak readers do?
They are selective as they read. They skip parts of text because they already know it or they don't think it will be useful.	
They go back and re-read information if they did not understand it the first time.	
They make inferences – they draw on their background knowledge or take cues from what they are reading to “read between the lines.”	
They monitor their comprehension as they read. They do this by rephrasing the information in their own minds, or they may look up the meaning of a difficult word.	
After they read, good readers reflect on the text. They may mentally summarize what they have read or make notes on it.	They don't think or reflect about what they have read. They don't use what they have read to help them connect with other information.
	Because reading is difficult for weak readers, they don't read as often or as widely as skilled readers – they don't practice reading. When they do read, they can become frustrated because most texts are too difficult for them.

Observations regarding readability

We consider one of the most important principles of clear language and design to be the focus on what readers want and need to know. Therefore, it is important to find out as much as we can about the needs and the reading abilities of our readers.

For the materials selected by LSS for review, two different groups of readers have been identified:

- Intermediaries, advocates, LSS intake staff, and settlement workers

- LSS clients and the general public

This diverse readership gives rise to challenges around readability: what is clear and easy to understand for the first group who have specific knowledge of the subject area may be difficult for the second group who might have limited knowledge of legal matters.

Furthermore, we know that there are readers with low literacy and people for whom English is a second language within both the client group and the general public. Our recommendations will specifically address the needs of these readers.

A description of target audiences for each publication reviewed can be found in Appendix C.

Print publications

Language

A review of the print materials indicates that many of the guidelines related to clear language have been observed. For example, the language used is largely familiar to readers, it is written directly to the reader, there is use of the active voice, and there is a logical ordering and integration of the information.

However, there are a number of readability issues that make the materials difficult for people with low literacy to read. For example, in some of the publications:

- the overall reading level is too high
- sentences are long and complex (e.g., “The information in this chapter is for Aboriginal parents who have been informed by the ministry or Aboriginal delegated agency that they’re being investigated for a child protection issue, or whose children have been removed from their home.”)
(From: *Parents’ Rights, Kids’ Rights*)
- paragraphs have too many sentences and topics (e.g., one paragraph in *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Right* includes a mention of rights under the Constitution Act, traditional versus modern activities, hunting methods, ancestral territory, harvesting rights, and treaty rights)
- definitions of legal vocabulary are not in clear language (e.g., “Interim Custody Order: A temporary order made by a judge that applies to both parties, until a final order is obtained at trial. It is based on the limited evidence and arguments presented when the order is requested.”)
(From: *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*)
- difficult vocabulary is not defined (e.g., undermine, relay, withholding, and breaches)
- words that may be familiar to people whose first language is English, may be difficult for people for whom English is a second language (e.g., bare facts, bulk of the work, upbringing)

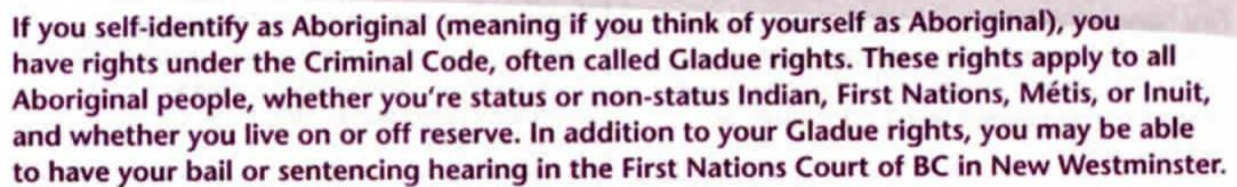
Layout and design

A review of the print materials indicates that many clear design guidelines have been observed. For example, left justified type, no hyphenation at the ends of lines, no underlined text, appropriate fonts for headings and body type, and use of headings and sub-headings to help readers find key information. All these factors help readers find their way around the page.

However, a number of the publications have design issues that directly affect readability, especially for readers with low literacy. For example:

- dense blocks of text that can discourage readers
- lines of text that are too long and hard to track

For example:



If you self-identify as Aboriginal (meaning if you think of yourself as Aboriginal), you have rights under the Criminal Code, often called Gladue rights. These rights apply to all Aboriginal people, whether you're status or non-status Indian, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit, and whether you live on or off reserve. In addition to your Gladue rights, you may be able to have your bail or sentencing hearing in the First Nations Court of BC in New Westminster.

- lack of graphics to reinforce or replace written information, and provide relief from dense text
- dark coloured screens that reduce contrast
- large screened logos behind dense blocks of text that reduce contrast

For example:

Did you have permission to hunt, fish, trap, or gather plants where the offence took place?

If the area where the offence took place isn't part of your traditional territory but another First Nation gave you permission to hunt, fish, or gather plants in its territory, it's important for your lawyer to know this. If your Aboriginal community has an understanding or agreement with the First Nation whose land you were on that allows you to hunt, fish, trap or gather plants there, this is also important.

Some First Nations have the authority to manage their own natural resources. Tell your lawyer if you were harvesting resources under the authority of your First Nation. For example, some First Nations manage their own fisheries and issue their own fishing openings. However, those openings aren't necessarily the same as the openings issued by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, in which case you might be charged by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Who can your lawyer contact in your Aboriginal community?

Your lawyer will need to meet with the people who represent your Aboriginal community. Members of your community who can help your lawyer get a better understanding of your case might include:

- the elected chief and council;
- the hereditary chief or the council of hereditary chiefs;
- elders;
- a representative from your First Nation's fisheries, forestry, or natural resources department; and
- the manager of your community's restorative justice program.

Your lawyer will want to meet with your community representatives as soon as possible so that he or she can find out whether your Aboriginal community supports you with regard to your case. Even if your Aboriginal community can't support you financially, if they feel that you had a right to do what you were doing when you were charged, this will strengthen your case. However, if your Aboriginal community doesn't support you, it's still important for you to tell your lawyer this.

Meeting with these people will also give your lawyer the chance to get an idea of what kind of relationship your Aboriginal community has with the agency that charged you. The relationship between your Aboriginal community and the agency might affect your options for dealing with your charges.

Do you have a record?

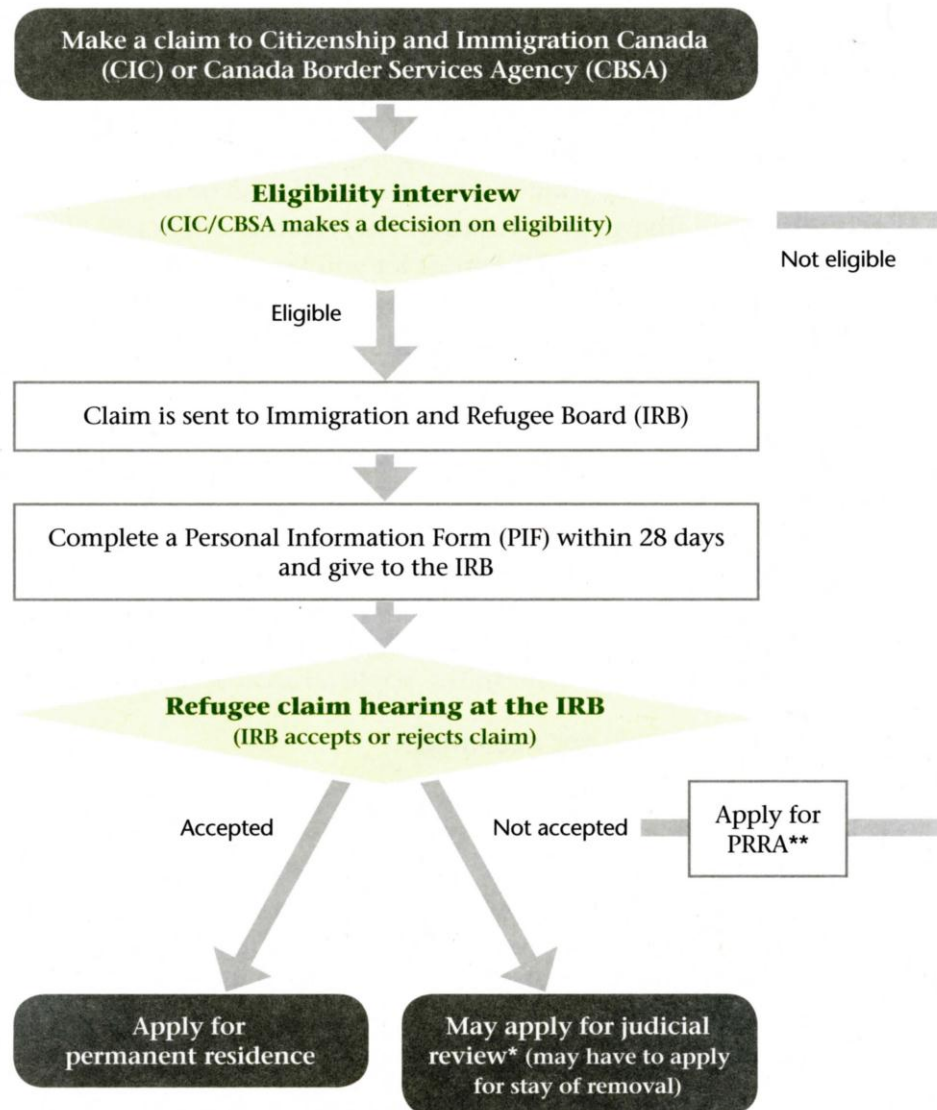
Your lawyer will need to know whether you've been charged with a similar offence in the past, or whether you've been charged with any other crimes now or in the past. For example, sometimes when you're charged with a harvesting offence, you might also be charged with criminal offences related to your situation at the time you were charged (such as uttering threats, obstruction of justice, or assaulting a peace officer).

Organization and flow of information

Flowcharts are used in several publications. This type of diagram can be helpful for readers, but using them successfully requires familiarity with the format and good navigational skills. Many people with low literacy lack the skills required to use them effectively.

For example:

Refugee claim process flowchart



* Must apply to Federal Court of Canada within 15 days of receiving written decision.

** Must apply within 15 days of receiving PRRA application form.

Note: Specific comments on the nine print publications reviewed may be found in Appendix B.

Website content

The checklists developed for the print materials were not used in evaluating the website materials, although reading level and some design elements were assessed and noted. Other factors, particular to websites, such as ease of navigation were addressed.

A number of the web pages have issues that directly affect readability, especially for readers with low literacy, these include:

- legal vocabulary that is not explained (for example: restraining order, peace bond, exempt)
- non-legal vocabulary that is not explained, or made clear from context (for example, pilot project, resolve, family dynamics, intimidation, harsh corporeal punishment)

- long, complex sentences (for example,

“If you were married and you applied for a divorce plus other things like custody, access, guardianship, or support under both the Family Relations Act and the Divorce Act, but your order doesn't specify which act the order was made under, the law assumes it was made under the Divorce Act. Section 17 of the Divorce Act governs all applications to change an order.”)

- some definitions are long and complex (for example,

“Special expenses are extra expenses for a child over and above the regular cost of living, such as child care expenses while the recipient works or goes to school or is ill or disabled, medical and dental insurance premiums specifically for the child, health-related expenses that exceed insurance reimbursement by at least \$100 annually, and expenses for post-secondary education.”)

- some excellent resources are “buried” and may not be seen because the user doesn’t scroll down far enough on the page or doesn’t click on a certain link (For example, the downloadable affidavit checklist on Checklist of information to include in an Affidavit as well as *Living Together or Living Apart* on the FAQs – Child Support page are both useful, but hard to find.)
- some PDFs are dense and difficult to read (for example, the 16-page PDF “Notice to Mediate (Family) Regulation” in Do I qualify for legal representation?)
- design elements such as white text on a green background are difficult to read

For example:

Home What's new Site map Using this site Contact us Feedback Legal Services Society

Family Law

in British Columbia Helping families use the law

Text Size: A A A f b

Your legal issue Your community Your FAQ Multilingual About us Search Go

Support — spousal

The basics Do it yourself FAQ Who can help Links Legislation/Court rules

Frequently asked questions

Can I get legal aid for my family law problem?

Legal aid, provided by the [Legal Services Society](#) (LSS), can take one of three possible forms: **legal representation** (a lawyer paid by legal aid to take your whole case), **legal advice** (brief legal advice on just a specific part of your case), or **legal information** (publications, websites, answers to email questions, etc.)

You must be financially eligible to get legal representation and most legal advice. There are two sets of financial guidelines: one for [legal advice](#) and one for [legal representation](#). Legal information (plus some kinds of legal advice) is free to all British Columbians. If you're reading this page, you've already received a form of legal aid.

To find out more about legal representation for family law problems and what's covered, see the [Serious family problems](#) or [Child protection matters](#) pages on the LSS website. If you don't qualify for legal representation, you may still be eligible for [legal advice](#) services. To find out for sure whether your particular case qualifies for legal representation, go to your [local legal aid office](#) (or call the [provincial LSS Call Centre](#)) to apply.

What are costs?

How do I serve Provincial or Supreme Court documents on my spouse if I don't know where he or she lives?

How do I serve Provincial or Supreme Court documents on my spouse if I can't find an address for him or her?

Can I serve Provincial Court documents on my separated spouse if he or she no longer lives in BC?

How do I serve Supreme Court documents on a spouse who lives outside BC or outside Canada?

How much time do I have to serve my Supreme Court documents after I file them with the court registry?

Where can I find a Supreme Court Notice of Intention to Proceed?

I need to fill out a Form F30. Where can I find a blank version of this form?

Do the new Supreme Court Family Rules apply to my case if any of my documents were filed before the new rules came into effect?

Shortcuts

[Self-help guides](#)
[Fact sheets](#)
[Who can help](#)
[Publications](#)
[Legislation / court rules](#)
[Court forms](#)
[Definitions](#)
[Videos](#)
[Audio clips](#)

Changes coming

[About the new Family Law Act](#)

Legal information or advice?

Legal information is general information about the law that helps someone identify a legal issue and the options that might be available to address that issue. **Legal advice** is specific to a situation. It involves applying the law to a particular situation, and providing a legal opinion and specific advice about the best course of action.

Note: Specific comments on the six web pages can be found in Appendix D.

Recommendations

In order to assist LSS to improve the readability of their materials, we would like to recommend a five-step process that takes into account the needs of all readers, while addressing the specific needs of people with low literacy. This five-step process to review materials may be offered as one of the training workshops for LSS, and is explained further in Part 3 of this document. Sample highlights of this process are as follows:

Step One

- Set up a reference group that offers different perspectives.
- Identify the purpose of the material.
- Identify the target audience.
- Determine the format.

Step Two

- Write the first draft in clear language.
- Collect feedback on your first draft.

Step Three

- Apply a clear design.

Step Four

- Collect feedback from readers on your final draft.

Step Five

- Evaluate the material after it has been in use for a determined amount of time.

Conclusion

From our review of selected publications and website pages, we have discovered many instances and examples of good practice that can lead to high readability. LSS's commitment to creating accessible legal information materials so people can make more informed legal choices is apparent.

With a deeper understanding of what good readers do to understand text and a clearer focus on the target audience, we believe we can guide LSS to revise current publications and develop new ones with increased readability. Adopting a process to review materials for an audience with low literacy is a process that can be woven into the current review practice for reviewing publications.

Part 2: Assessment of communication – intake location observations and intake interviews

Scope and objectives of the intake location visits are to provide recommendations to:

- enhance communications with clients with low literacy at intake
- enhance communications in general and PLEI materials for user groups
- ensure offices and centres are literacy friendly for all client groups

Approach taken for intake and office observations

The best practice statements in the *Opening Doors: A Literacy Audit Toolkit* from Literacy Alberta were used as the basis for observations. At each location, the “route” that clients take as they either enter the building or dial the phone and find their way to intake staff for the interview or telephone conversation was observed through a literacy lens. Following that, the interaction, collection of information, and communication of the decision on eligibility, was also observed. Samples of these best practice statements from the Literacy Audit Toolkit can be found in Appendix E.

Intake locations visited:

- 222 Main Street courthouse (Vancouver)
- Vancouver Regional Centre intake clinic at 510 Burrard Street
- Surrey courthouse
- Surrey legal aid office

A visit to Atira Womens’ Resource Society, a community partner, was planned in order to get a sense of how these service providers work with clients with low literacy. In the brief period of the research, this meeting was not able to be scheduled.

Throughout this report, LSS staff who handle intake will be referred to as intake staff or staff.

All staff observed were accomplished communicators. Most adjusted pace and content of the interview to accommodate the client. They were not necessarily thinking about the literacy skills of the client, but they were adjusting to the client’s responses in order to communicate effectively. This is a great foundation for new skills and ideas that accommodate the needs of clients with low literacy.

Summary of recommendations

The recommendations in this report are summarized below. More detail and discussion follow in the body of the report.

No.	In context	Recommendation
1.	Policy and procedures	Define literacy for use in LSS policy, PLIA procedures, and PLEI materials. (page 17 - 18)
2.	Intake process and staff training	Develop a standard intake process to quickly identify clients with low literacy and train LSS staff in techniques for identifying and working with clients with low literacy. (page 18)
3.	Networking	Develop relationships with the province-wide network of literacy outreach coordinators and literacy organizations. (page 19)
4.	Visual communications: Intake locations, including courthouse locations and legal aid offices	Organize publication displays in the waiting areas. (page 23) <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Put signs on the wall above the publication racks to label the materials. For instance, label a section “family”, or “criminal,” or “Aboriginal”.b) Use a font for the signage that is readable from across the room. With these signs in place, a client can gaze around the room without having to get up and find out what topics are covered. It will help them sort what is of interest to them.c) Make the display more dynamic by adding a rack labeled “new” and keep items there for a month or so, and then move them into the standard rack.d) Leave a space between racks of different legal issues.e) Make sure that all titles are visible.
5.	PLEI materials	Create a “readability” chart for publications so that intake staff can choose appropriate versions for clients with low literacy. Put a readability code on the outside cover of publications. (pages 23 - 24)

No.	In context	Recommendation
6.	Visual communications: intake locations, including courthouse locations and legal aid offices	<p>Use bulletin boards and wall space as dynamic and useful communication tools. (page 24)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consider some of the tips on bulletin board design and maintenance in Appendix F. b) The large legal process flowchart poster is too complex for a weak reader. Move the posters to a less central location. Those who are interested in the contents, and are able to read the poster, will go to it.
7.	Intake environment	<p>Find a way to reduce the possibility of intrusion and distraction due to the hallway traffic outside interview offices. (pages 25 - 26)</p>
8.	Audio communications: Call Centre phone script	<p>Re-script the LSS Call Centre telephone messages for clear language, organization, content, and pacing. (pages 26 - 27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide an introduction before each new topic in the voice message. b) Instead of going directly to “For services in English press 1”, add a line that says “We can provide services in many languages. Listen for your language.” c) Insert the statement about the call being monitored immediately after the information about language choice, and before the contract information. d) Before starting the list of contractual agreements, add a statement that says you must agree to all four in order to qualify for service. Then, “Listen carefully to the following list. When you agree to these four items, you are signing a contract with us.” <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Delete the contractual agreements from the voice message and get these agreements signed off during the intake interview. f) The message by the male voice needs to be spoken more slowly. g) Keep print copies of the list of items at the jail and advise the client to request a copy.

No.	In context	Recommendation
9.	Intake documentation and in-person assistance	Revise and reduce the length of the Intake Pre-Application form. (pages 27 - 29) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Provide a table or desk in waiting areas for clients to sit at when filling in forms. b) When handing a client the application form in reception, tell them that if they have difficulty with it they can fill it out with intake staff in the interview. c) Set up the intake staff desks so that the document holder is near to where the client sits.
10.	Intake documentation	Simplify the Legal Aid Representation Service Contract and present it as a separate document. (page 30)
11.	PLEI materials and staff training	Revise or create publications that are readable at a Level 2 or below and flag them for use with that audience, and train LSS staff using the five-step review process. (pages 34 and 48) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Do a follow up study on the usage of publications. b) Create more easy-to-read fact sheets. c) Add literacy organizations to the network of resources to help clients read publications.
12.	LSS websites	Revise LSS websites for readability and navigability related to clients with low literacy.(page 34)

Three primary recommendations

1. Define literacy for use in LSS policy, materials, and procedures.

In order to recognize, identify, and communicate effectively with clients with low literacy, LSS will need to define literacy in specific enough terms to provide guidance to the organization. This is especially important because identification as a client with low literacy may qualify the client for a lawyer through an exception review process, if the client also meets the financial requirements.

Legal Services Society currently has no agreed upon definition of literacy to guide its development of materials and communication protocols with clients. There are several definitions of literacy available.

UNESCO defines literacy as:

“Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts.

Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society.”

The International Adult Literacy Skills Survey from 2003 defined five levels of reading proficiency:

Level 1: People at this level have difficulty reading and have few basic skills or strategies for working with text. For example, they often can't figure out how much medicine to take from the information on the package.

Level 2: People at this level can read, but do not read well. They need material that is simple and clearly laid out.

Level 3: People at this level can read well but may have problems with more complex tasks. This level is considered by many countries to be the minimum skill level for successful participation in society.

Level 4/5: People at this level have strong literacy skills and many strategies for dealing with complex materials. These individuals can handle new reading challenges and meet most reading demands.

For purposes of reviewing the LSS intake process, the IALSS (2003) Level 1 and 2 descriptions were used. The 42 percent of working-age adults in Canada with lower literacy skills than is needed to cope with the increasing information demands of our society fall into these two levels. In grade level language, this would be approximately grades 5 - 8. When the term “low literacy” is used in this report, it is a reference to people who are functioning at Level 1 or 2.

The skills identified as essential for learning, work, and life are: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking, computer use, and continuous learning. A client applying for legal aid and winding their way through the justice system needs considerable proficiency in all of these skills.

2. Develop a standard process to quickly identify clients with low literacy.

Although LSS is working to make their communications clearer for clients with low literacy, the rest of the justice system may not do that for some time, if ever. So clients with low literacy will need on-going additional help to navigate the system. Therefore, it is important to identify them at the outset and set them up with a lawyer and other supports. This could include reading help through the provincial network of literacy organizations.

Intake staff need a routine process for identifying clients with low literacy. It could be as simple as asking if they have difficulty reading and understanding the documents they receive. Asking a direct question about a person's reading ability is often avoided because many people with low literacy skills habitually hide their lack of skill. However, if they know it could help them get a lawyer, they may be willing to tell.

Additionally, clients approaching LSS for help come prepared. They present well with their story and appearance both in person and on the phone. The clues to their actual literacy level are subtle. Knowing a person's education level is not necessarily an accurate indication of their reading and comprehension skills.

Searches for a definition of literacy and process for identifying clients with low literacy on both the Pivot and the Public Legal Education Association of Canada websites produced no results. Neither website mentions literacy, although they do mention writing in plain language. Writing in plain language does not necessarily mean writing for an audience with low literacy skills.

3. Develop relationships with the province-wide network of literacy outreach coordinators and literacy organizations

British Columbia has an extensive network of literacy outreach coordinators that can connect people to literacy organizations. These organizations provide literacy education, advocacy, and support for learners. They do not currently provide on-call reading support for legal aid clients. This idea would need some development in the literacy field.

The rest of the recommendations will be discussed within the context of the intake location observations.

How literacy-friendly are the legal aid intake offices?



Finding the offices for walk-in clients

Main Street courthouse The office was easy to find right inside main entrance to courthouse. There is good signage to the left of the office door.

Vancouver intake clinic: To locate this office, a potential client must know to look at the glass covered office list in main foyer on ground floor. There is a concierge at a desk there who can provide assistance. He is friendly and tells people how to find the office when asked. When a client gets off the elevator on 4th floor, the signage to the legal aid office is clear.

Surrey courthouse: If a client knows that Legal Aid is next to Court Room 100, he or she can find signage to Court Room 100 easily. If he or she doesn't know, they have to ask someone or wander around looking. Once in the area of the office, the signage is clear. It would be very helpful for clients if a direction sign for the legal aid office were to be placed inside the ground floor main entrance. It could be on or near the case with the Court 100 schedule.

Surrey legal aid office: The office is located on ground floor just inside main entry to building. There is good signage at and on the door.

Office and waiting room atmospheres



Courthouse offices

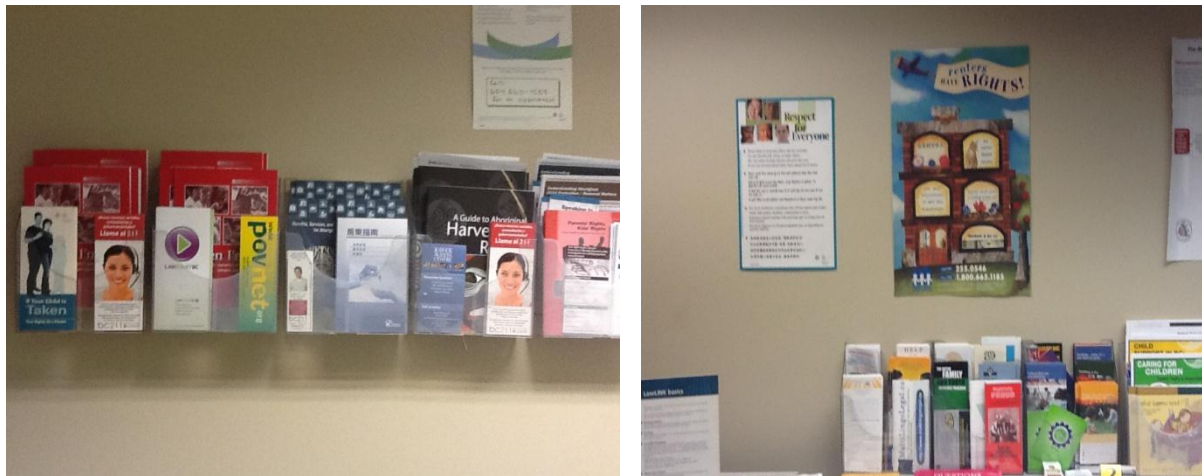
There are chairs across the hall from the interview office door. There are no posters or information is available for clients to peruse while waiting for their turn. The Surrey courthouse has the addition of a space that is separated from the hallway by a low concrete barrier.

Consider providing information displays and racks in the waiting areas at the courthouses.

Vancouver intake clinic and the Surrey legal aid office

Both offices have large waiting rooms with comfortable chairs. The reception area is glassed-in for security purposes. There are pamphlet racks on the walls, full of documents, pamphlets, and brochures. There is a cork bulletin board for posting notices. Mounted on the walls are several large format information posters (i.e., legal process maps).

Information and displays



During the intake location visits, the researcher did not observe any clients looking at the pamphlet racks or posters on walls inside the interview office. Out in the waiting area, only one client browsed and took a publication. A first-time client who seemed to need more information was given a pamphlet by the intake staff on his way out of the office. He took it without looking at it.

Vancouver intake clinic and the Surrey legal aid office

While it is helpful to have a large variety and quantity of publications, if they are not well organized they may not be well utilized. The walls at the Vancouver intake clinic and the Surrey legal aid office have a lot of material on them and this can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate. You have to stand up close to the rack and spend time reading the title of each publication in order to know what is there, let alone choose one to take or read. Some publications are behind others so the title is not visible. The publication in front is not on the same topic as the ones behind.



Recommendation

4. Organize the display of documents and pamphlets in the waiting areas.
 - a. Put signs on the wall above the racks to label the materials. For instance, label a section “family”, or “criminal,” or “Aboriginal”.
 - b. Use a font for the signage that is readable from across the room. With these signs in place, a client can gaze around the room without having to get up and find out what topics are covered. It will help them sort what is of interest to them.
 - c. Make the display more dynamic by adding a rack labeled “new” and keep items there for a month or so and then move them into the standard rack.
 - d. Leave a space between racks of different legal matters.
 - e. Make sure that all titles are visible.

Main Street and Surrey courthouses

In the smaller offices at the courthouses, there are no publications available outside in the waiting area. It appears that having publications in these waiting areas is not an option. The smaller racks in the offices are located beside and behind the client’s chair. Information is displayed on plastic racks on the wall or on book case shelves. It is not likely that a weak reader will take time during the interview or make an effort to look at the publications during the interview. Therefore, the publications in the offices are really there for the intake staff to offer to clients.



Recommendation

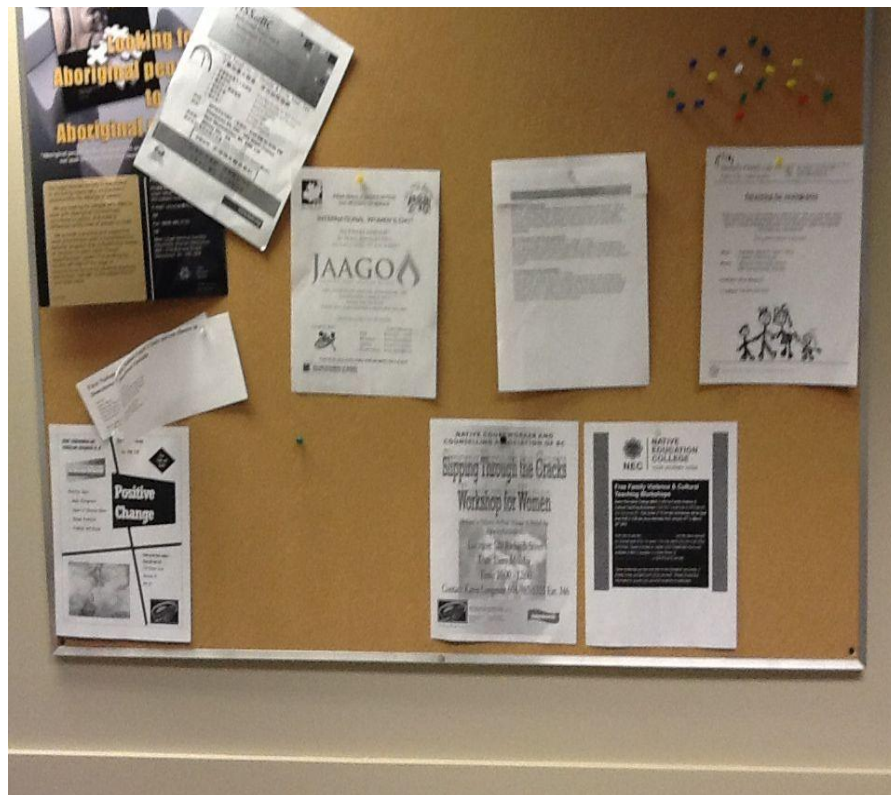
5. Create a “Readability” chart for publications so that intake staff can offer appropriate versions for clients with low literacy. Put a readability code on the outside cover of publications.
 - a. If the intake legal assistant suspects the publication may be challenging to read, acknowledge that it is a difficult read and encourage the client to get help reading and understanding it at home or with help from an advocacy or literacy organization.

- b. Show the client the part of the publication that would be useful. Mark it with a highlighter or post-it tag on the page.

Bulletin boards and walls

All the offices have bulletin boards and wall space used to post information. The bulletin boards in the interview offices are largely for the use of LSS intake staff.

The bulletin boards in the waiting areas and the wall space used for posting information could be better utilized by improving the organization of information.



Recommendation

6. Use bulletin boards and wall space as dynamic and useful communication tools.
 - a. Consider some of the tips on *Bulletin Board Design and Maintenance* in Appendix F.
 - b. The large legal process flowchart poster is too complex for a weak reader. Move the posters to a less central location. Those who are interested in the poster, and are able to read it, will go to it.

Recommendation

7. Find a way to reduce the possibility of intrusion and distraction due to the hallway traffic outside interview office doors.

The intake interview

Getting started on the phone

The first communication with the LSS Call Centre is with a voice message. The voice message includes various voices with different pacing. When a potential client phones the call centre, he or she is greeted with a female voice which is clear and speaks at a good pace. However, if the caller is phoning from jail and presses number 3, there is a pause and the voice and pace change. The next voice is male and speaks quickly.

LSS has the capacity to serve clients in many languages. The voice message asks which language the caller prefers by using the familiar statement, “For services in English press 1”. The caller must know to wait past the English and French prompts to get to other language choices.

The voice message then continues in the process of obtaining agreement to the contract. A caution that the call is being monitored is given, as if it is part of the list of agreements. The message says “You must agree” and then gives the list of contractual agreements. At the end of this list, the message says “this call is being monitored”. Then the client is told to press 1 to agree to the list.

The intake staff routinely goes over the list of contractual agreements again during the intake interview. It is more likely that you will get informed consent with the agreements through this more interactive process.

Recommendations

8. Re-script LSS Call Centre voice messaging for clear language, organization, and pacing.
 - a. Provide an introduction before each new topic in the voice message.
 - b. Instead of going directly to “For services in English press 1”, add a line that says “We can provide services in many languages. Listen for your language.”
 - c. Insert the statement about the call being monitored immediately after the information about language choice, and before the contract information.
 - d. Before starting the list of contractual agreements, add a statement that says you must agree to all four items to qualify for service. Then, “Listen carefully to the following list. When you agree to these four items, you are signing a contract with us.”

Or

- e. Delete the contractual agreements from the voice message and get these agreements signed off during the intake interview.

For those phoning from jail, if duty council is not available immediately on the phone, the client is told to leave a message with the following information and then a list of items is given. The list is spoken once, quickly. There is no time for the client to take notes of the list. No repetition of the list is offered to help remember the items. The message does emphasize the need for a call back number, so the client can get a return call. Will an incarcerated person have a phone number or know the number at the jail? Can the client get a written copy of the list of items needed somewhere at the jail? If so, that information should be included in the message.

Recommendations (continued)

- f. The message by the male voice needs to be spoken more slowly.
- g. Keep print copies of the list of items at the jail and advise the client to request a copy.

Getting started in person

The first task a client at the legal aid office is required to do – the completion of the application form – is in fact a high level literacy task. A snapshot of the readability level of parts of the application form assess it at about grade 14 or 15 – definitely beyond the reading ability of clients with low literacy.

There are two different application processes used.

First application process

In most offices, the client is handed the Intake Pre-Application form on a clip board to complete independently. The client is asked to fill it out and bring it back. There are no tables or desks available to provide a solid surface for writing. A solid surface is better for a person who may have challenges with writing.

When the client returns to the receptionist with the form, the information is reviewed and the client is prompted to complete areas missed or improperly completed. If there are not many people waiting, the receptionist may take time to help the client to complete the form.

In one office, the receptionist transferred the information on the application form to the computer, to be ready for the intake staff. In the other, the receptionist just handed the completed form to the intake staff. If, through this process and interaction, a concern arises for mental health issues, learning disability, or volatile behavior, the receptionist flags the file for the intake staff's information. Low literacy would qualify as a reason to flag the file.

If the application information was transferred to the computer by the receptionist, the intake interview still starts with clarification of information from the form. The intake staff always double-checks information on the application form.

In one office without a receptionist, the intake legal assistant repeatedly interrupted the interview to give the next client the Intake Pre-Application form on a clip board.

Second application process

The second process observed was entirely oral. Instead of giving the client the form, the intake staff just invited the client to sit down and asked the client the questions on the form. The staff entered the information required directly into the computer.

This is always the procedure used for phone-in clients – with the exception that the client has already agreed to the contract via an automated response on the phone.

In both approaches, the client sits with the intake staff and answers the questions on the application form while they are typed into the computer or as the staff reviews and clarifies the information. Intake staff uses a Q&A process to go over the form. This gives them the required information and an idea of the communication style and ability of the client. It is also an excellent time to notice the literacy skills of the client. The conversation arising builds rapport as intake staff asks questions and lets the client know what is in the computer and what is being added – history and case notes on the situation.

It is tempting to eliminate the application form from the walk-in offices. However, that would also eliminate one important clue about the literacy level of the client – handwriting and ability to fill out the form.

One intake staff says 80 percent of the forms aren't legible. Some parts of the form are not completed. Some parts only partially completed. Some parts are incorrectly filled out. During the observation sessions, there was not a single intake that did not require some additions and clarification of the information on the form. How the client fills out this form is an important indicator of literacy skills. Illegible handwriting, poor spelling, and incomplete responses may indicate low literacy skills.

The awkwardness of writing on a clip board balanced on your lap no doubt contributes to messy handwriting. The Vancouver intake clinic has a table for client use, but it is in the information centre where it is not visible to the clients in the waiting room. If a client did go in there to use the desk, there is no clear space for writing. The desk is used as a display area for publications and a public access computer. A table or desk could give clients a place to sort out their papers.

Typing information into the computer can be distracting for both the client and the intake staff. Clients tend to gaze around the room or stare blankly at the desk while the staff is typing. Staff who have touch-typing skills were best able to keep up eye contact with the client while completing the form on the computer.

The placement of the document stand on the desk is also important. In some cases, the document stand is on the opposite side of the computer screen from the client. In others, it is on the same side as the client. It is easier to stay in contact with the client if you can look at him or her over or beside the document stand. If it is placed on the opposite side of the computer screen, it is another distraction as the intake staff looks away from the client to refer to the application form.

Recommendations

9. Revise and reduce the length of the Pre-Application form.
 - a. Provide a table or desk in waiting areas for clients to sit at when filling in forms.
 - b. When handing a client the application form in reception, tell them that if they have difficulty with it they can fill it out with intake staff during the interview.
 - c. Set up the intake staff desks so that the document holder is near to where the client sits.

Communication during the interview

Only one of the intake staff introduced herself by her name and gave a brief summary of her role – “I am not a lawyer, not here to give legal advice – my job is to decide if you are eligible.” All of the staff gave their card to clients when they left and invited them to call or come back if they had more questions or needed to talk to them again.

It may be a good practice for intake staff to introduce themselves by name at the beginning of the interview and give a short summary of their role. This creates a more equal atmosphere for the rest of the conversation right from the beginning. The staff already knows the client’s name from the application form.

Staff summarized the client’s history as it is recorded in the computer, what was done, and what is likely available now. Clients appreciated reviewing their history and the opportunity to add or correct information.

In one case, a client hadn’t acted on information sent in a letter some months before and didn’t remember it. The staff responded to the issue by saying, “It’s all in the letter you received in August” and then moved on to the next thing. Not following instructions and not remembering the instructions are both indicators of low literacy. It may be a good practice to stop to check understanding, first by clarifying that the client received the letter last August. Then follow up with “Did you understand the letter?” or “Do you have any questions about the letter?” or “Did you bring a copy of the letter with you? Let’s go over it and make sure you understand what it is saying.”

All staff used communication skills that work well with clients with low literacy. Most intake staff spoke slowly and clearly enunciated their words. Only one spoke quickly, not matching the pace of the client. All kept their tone steady and non-judgmental. They stayed business-like, warm, and efficient. They never rushed the client. They let clients talk freely, while keeping the interview going and on track gathering the information needed. Staff gently persisted in getting answers that were needed, even when it was an emotional issue for the client, who wanted to tell stories and vent their feelings. The intake staff allowed time for some of that while guiding the interview back to the necessary questions.

When a client did not understand something, the intake staff were usually good about rephrasing questions to be sure the client understood and that the correct information was being recorded in the computer system. They were relaxed and calm about explaining things

as many times as it took to understand. When clients weren't sure how to fill out a form or answer a question, the staff helped them by using a Q&A process. Then they confirmed information as it was entered into the computer.

Unless the client said something about not understanding, staff assumed understanding. Sometimes they ask the general question, "Do you understand?" Staff take silence, head nods or "yes" as agreement that the client understood. With one client who clearly did not understand and was getting agitated with the attempt to help him understand, the staff told him to take the list to his court date and give it to the judge who would give him what he needed.

Forms and documents used in intake interview

All of the forms used during the initial interview are written at a readability level which is too high for clients with low literacy. All clients, even those with good literacy skills would benefit from a revision of all these documents to level 2 readability following Clear Language and Design (CLAD) principles. One of the proposed training modules in Part 3 of this report covers this topic in a workshop format.

The following are the forms and documents:

1. Intake Pre-Application form
2. More Information Needed
3. Ministry of Social Development Release of Personal Information
4. Change of Counsel Request – Client Questionnaire
5. Legal Aid Representation Services – Approved
6. Legal Aid Representation – Refused
7. Legal Aid Application – Letter of Support
8. Legal assistance agencies

Legal Aid Representation Services Contract

The Legal Aid Representation Services Contract appears as part of both *the More Information Needed* and *Legal Aid Representation Services – Approved* forms. As discussed earlier, it is also summarized for agreement during the call centre voice message. If verbal agreement to the summarized version is adequate for the call-in clients, is it also adequate for use in the face-to-face applications?

Intake staff noted that the Services Contract was the most difficult document to simplify in order to explain it to clients. They particularly pointed out the section on judgments and settlements in family cases.

Recommendation

10. Simplify the contract and present it as a separate document.

Snapshot of readability level of documents used during the initial interview

Readability scales are a helpful tool in getting a quick assessment of the readability of a document. They assess only the text. They do not look at the layout or design on the page. How information is organized on the page has a significant effect on the reader's ability to navigate and understand the text. This is especially true of people with low literacy.

There are several different readability scales available. The exact readability statistics may differ slightly between scales. The samples in this section were assessed using an online readability calculator (www.online-utility.org). This free online software tool calculates readability in a variety of ways: Coleman Liau index, Flesch Kincaid Grade Level, ARI (Automated Readability Index), and SMOG. The measure of readability used is the indication of number of years of education that a person needs to be able to understand the text easily on the first reading. The online tool also measures the Flesch Reading Ease, described earlier in the report. In general, these tests penalize writers for polysyllabic words and long, complex sentences. Writing that uses simple diction and short sentences will score better.

Some things to remember about readability scores:

- The grade level shows how many years of education you need to understand the text.
- The Flesch Reading Ease score shows readability of the passage on a scale from 0 - 100. Material that is easier to read gets a higher score. More difficult material gets a lower score.
- The Flesch Reading Ease test was described on page 3 of this report.

Samples of readability levels of documents used at intake

Intake Pre-Application form

4. Financial Information

The Legal Services Society provides legal information, legal advice, and legal representation (a lawyer to handle your case). Everyone is eligible for our legal information services. For our legal advice services, we ask you to provide some financial information to see if you qualify. Legal representation is available for those who meet our financial eligibility guidelines and only for certain criminal, family CFCSA, and immigration matters.

Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level 15.3

Flesch Reading Ease 14.5

Legal Aid Representation Services Contract

This contract sets out the terms and conditions on which LSS is providing aid including when LSS will or will not continue to provide me with legal aid. In return for LSS providing legal aid, I promise to carry out these terms and conditions.

Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level 9.9

Flesch Reading Ease 63.4

Duty to tell the truth

I acknowledge that all the information I have provided to LSS concerning my financial situation and my legal case is the truth.

Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level 12.2

Flesch Reading Ease 46

Changes to financial or legal situation

I will tell LSS about changes to my financial situation (for example, if I get a new job, obtain money through an inheritance or case settlement, or if anything else financially significant happens to me) and any changes to my legal case that may affect whether I am eligible for legal aid.

Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level 23.9

Flesch Reading Ease 15.7

More information needed

The Legal Services Society (LSS) cannot approve or refuse your application for a lawyer to represent you (legal aid) until you provide enough information to confirm that you are eligible under LSS financial and coverage policies. To make a decision on your application, we require more information.

Flesch-Kincaid reading grade level 16.6

Flesch Reading Ease 17.4

Helping clients understand the documents used in the interview

The intake staff explains the contents of the documents and fills out parts of the form for the client. For example, with the checklist of additional information needed, most staff read or paraphrased the contents for the client. Most intake staff turned the document to the client and went through it with the client. This is an excellent practice and should be encouraged. Therefore, standardize the process of summarizing and presenting documents to clients.

Vancouver Regional Centre intake clinic

During the time spent in the Vancouver Regional Centre intake clinic, there were no walk-in clients or phone calls. So, the staff were interviewed about the process they use and how the centre operates.

Most of the clients who use the intake clinic do so because they were refused legal aid and the intake legal assistant referred them to the intake clinic. Of the people referred to the LSS Call Centre, 90 percent access it by phone. The call centre gets 25 to 30 calls a day.

Very few people walk into the centre. Those who do walk-in come into the centre's display area where there is a public-use computer and publication racks and information displays. They rarely use the computer.

Both on the phone and in person, the staff talks with the client about their case and what kind of information they need and then recommends some publications. The staff must make a match between the client's needs and interest and an appropriate publication. There is no chart of readability levels for the publications. It is difficult to make a good judgment about a person's reading ability especially from a phone call.

If the staff senses the person is really confused or has low literacy skills, they will spend more time on the phone, but there is not enough time to go over publications and summarize the contents in language people would readily understand. So, staff refers the client to an advocacy group that can help them with the publications, such as disabilities associations and seniors groups.

To get copies of the publications, clients must go to the LSS website or the Crown Publications website to download them. Finding and downloading publications from the website is often difficult for clients. For those people who indicate they may have difficulty doing this, the publication can be mailed. Those who are having this difficulty are also hard to coach over the phone.

Many of the callers are immigrants. Very few have research skills and most have little time. Some will not even look at publications no matter how they are delivered to them. They are looking for specific information and immediate help. Clients prefer the fact sheets to the full publications. They are short and to the point. The full publications contain too much information and are often 60+ pages long. More fact sheets on more subjects would be helpful for these clients.

The criminal publications are mostly distributed at the courthouses. They are not very accessible to the group collecting them there. Many are repeat offenders and often have low literacy skills.

The publications may be most valuable if used for preventative purposes. Although much is known about how many publications are distributed and their geographic distribution, not much is known about who reads and understands them and how they are actually used.

Recommendations

11. Revise or create publications that are readable at a Level 2 or below and flag them for use with that audience.
 - a. Do a follow up study on the usage of publications.
 - b. Create more easy-to-read fact sheets.
 - c. Add literacy organizations to the network of resources to help clients read publications.
12. Assess and revise LSS websites for readability and navigability related to clients with low literacy.

People with low literacy often have difficulties organizing paper, remembering lists of things and schedules, and following directions. Here are some suggestions for ways to support organization and recall:

- a. When giving clients phone numbers for other resources, write down the numbers. If using the “Legal Assistance Agencies” sheet, highlight the resources being recommended.
- b. When giving clients documents, give them a coloured file folder to hold them and staple your card to the folder. People with low literacy skills often have limited organizational skills for paper as well. Advise them to keep their documents in the folder and take it with them to all their appointments and appearances.
- c. When helping clients with scheduling, if they have a calendar function in their cell phone, have them enter the dates in the calendar while still in the office.
- d. When giving a client reminder notes, print them clearly on pastel-coloured paper so that the note is easy to find amongst their documents.

Legal Assistance Agencies Sheet Revision

Clear Language and Design revision suggestions:

1. Use a portrait orientation.
2. Organize information in two columns and use both sides of the page.
3. Delete all bold, underlining, italics, and capitals, unless it is an acronym.
4. Increase text font size to 12pt, Times New Roman (a serif font).
5. Increase title font size to 14pt, Arial or Verdana (a sans serif font).
6. Organize the information in categories (i.e., information, civil issues, seniors’ issues, lawyers, advocates, etc.)

Sample entries after edit:

Legal advice

LSLAP UBC Law Students

Refugee clinics, civil, and criminal issues

Vancouver: 604-822-5791

Victoria: 250-388-4516

UBC First Nations Legal Clinic

Aboriginal peoples legal issues, including
criminal, family CFCSA and civil matters.

604-684-7334

1-888-684-7874

Seniors' issues

SAIL Line BC

Elder advocacy and information

604-437-1940

1-866-437-1940

Health and Seniors' Information Line

Senior peer counselors

Information about government services

1-800-465-4911

Part 3: Training plan and modules

The information gained and recommendations suggested in Parts 1 and 2 of the literacy review have been used to develop the depth and scope of the following training opportunities.

It is obvious that LSS staff and others working with clients wanting legal information have a great commitment to effective communication and making sure PLEI materials are as accessible as possible. It is also apparent that staff could benefit from having an increased confidence in recognizing and managing clients with low literacy. Thus, training has been developed to ensure that intake staff, Legal Information Outreach Workers (LIOWs), Aboriginal Community Legal Workers (ACLWs), outreach workers, community partners, local agents, and intermediaries have a good understanding of literacy and best practices for communicating PLEI to audiences with low literacy.

This final section outlines a proposed training plan, makes suggestions for delivery modes, and includes modules to accompany the training. Final decisions on the scope of this training will be made at a later date.

Delivery modes

The training modules can be delivered in a few ways. A few sessions may be offered at the annual intake conference.

The series of training modules listed below can also be delivered in smaller, weekly sessions at 45 minutes to 3 hours in length. This mode of delivery will allow time for reflection on new knowledge gained and give LSS staff and others a chance to practice new skills related to working with clients with low literacy.

The training modules are as follows:

1. Raising awareness about literacy
2. Recognizing the signs of low literacy
3. Communication strategies to support people with low literacy
4. Clear language and design (CLAD)
5. Five-step process to review materials

Raising awareness about literacy

Literacy is often a difficult concept to explain because it is about much more than reading and writing. So what exactly is it? This training session will provide participants with a concrete definition for understanding literacy, knowledge about how it is measured, and a general picture of the people in society most affected by it.

The guiding questions in this session are as follows:

- What is “literacy”? How is it defined?
- How is literacy measured?
- What are Canadian literacy levels?
- Who are the people with low literacy?
- How do we know these things? Does this match your experience?

Workshop type: PowerPoint presentation of key concepts, with small group discussion sharing answers to the question in the handout with larger group.

Amount of time needed: 45 minutes to 1 hour

Materials: Handouts will be provided (four-page handout)

Number of participants: 8 - 24

What is literacy?

UNESCO definition of literacy:

“Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning to enable an individual to achieve his or her goals, to develop his or her knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in the wider society.”

Flesch Reading Ease 10.7

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level 18.3

In simpler words,

"Literacy is the ability to use and understand information that is essential to daily life at work, at home, and in the community."

Flesch Reading Ease 36.3

Flesch Kincaid Grade Level 13.9

The important thing to remember when seeking an understanding of literacy is that literacy is not whether someone can read, but how well they can read. In addition to reading and writing, there are many other skills related to how people use information gained through text.

How is literacy measured?

In 2003, more than 23,000 Canadians took part in an International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS). In this survey, four skills were measured:

- **Prose literacy:** the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts
- **Document literacy:** the knowledge and skills needed to find and use information in various formats, like schedules, maps, tables, and charts
- **Numeracy:** the knowledge and skills needed to do arithmetic and understand numbers in printed materials
- **Problem solving:** the process of solving problems by using goal-directed thinking and action, when the person does not have a routine to follow

Everyone who took part in the survey was rated on each skill on a scale from 0 to 500 points. Although four skills were measured, only the first three listed above were reported on. An individual's prose literacy, document literacy, and numeracy scores were grouped into five levels of competency. The Government of Canada sets Level 3 as the minimum literacy that people need to cope with the increasing information demands of our society. The Conference

Board of Canada believes that, in an information society, people need a score of at least 300 to be employable.

Five cognitive levels:		
Level 1	0 - 225 points	This is the lowest level of literacy.
Level 2	226 - 275 points	
Level 3	276 - 325 points	This is the minimum level needed.
Level 4	326 - 375 points	
Level 5	376 - 500 points	This is the highest level of literacy.

How did Canadians measure up?

- 58 percent of the adults in Canada aged 16 to 65 have the basic reading skills they need for most everyday tasks.
- The average score for Canadian adults in prose literacy and document literacy is near the bottom of Level 3.
- About two in every five Canadian adults – 9 million people – can't read well enough to do everyday things. If we add in the people who are older than 65, that number goes up to 12 million Canadians.
- The average for numeracy and problem solving is just below Level 3. Only 45 percent of adults in Canada aged 16 to 65 can do everyday arithmetic and understand the numbers in printed materials.
- Some people who have low literacy skills come from vulnerable groups, but that isn't the whole story. This problem affects many people in the general adult population too.
- Neighbourhoods with low literacy levels tend to have higher crime rates.

These basic facts show the challenge to improve literacy performance among Canadians is far from over and affects many aspects of the work we do to provide legal information.

Who are the people with low literacy?

Based on the results of 2003 International Adult Literacy and Skills survey, we can make some broad statements about the people with low literacy skills in Canada:

- 2.6 million are immigrants
- 5.8 million are employed and over 800,000 are unemployed
- 2.4 million are not actively in the workforce
- 3.1 million have less than high school education
- 3.3 million finished high school
- 2.6 million have post-secondary education

Putting a human face on the numbers

People who have low literacy are found throughout Canadian society – they live in all the provinces and territories, they belong to all ethnic and religious groups, they are in all income groups, and they have a whole range of levels of education.

Low literacy is more common in some specific groups than in Canadian society as a whole. These groups include:

- seniors
- immigrants
- Aboriginal Canadians
- Francophones
- people within the corrections system
- people who experienced one or more major roadblocks in their education when they were children or young adults, like being the victim of:
 - neglect
 - abuse
 - poverty
 - poor nutrition
 - racial discrimination

More facts about low literacy in Canada

- Men are more likely to have low literacy skills than women.
- Some children had learning disabilities or social problems when they were in school, and never became good readers.
- Many people don't read regularly. They get their news from television and radio. They don't read for enjoyment either – they get their entertainment from the Internet, TV, movies, and concerts. Gradually, they lose their reading skills.
- Many senior citizens have only elementary school education, and their reading skills were never up to today's standard. Others have stopped reading and let their skills decline.
- Some immigrants who may be literate in their first language are still learning English or French. Others are not literate in their first language and find it difficult to learn how to read in a second language. Even those immigrants whose first language is English or French have lower literacy than those people born in Canada.
- Low literacy in Canada is a personal, family, community, and societal challenge.

Source: www.policeabc.ca

Question:

In what ways does low literacy impact your work?

Recognizing the signs of low literacy

Under the guidelines for legal aid, a client identified as having low literacy may qualify for a lawyer through an exception review process. Because of this, it is vital that intake staff and other intermediaries be able to recognize the subtle signs of low literacy.

Before you can make changes for people who have low literacy skills, you must first be able to identify who they are. Keep in mind that people who have trouble reading, writing, and understanding verbal information often try to cover up their problem or aren't even aware of it. They use a variety of strategies to do this, including avoidance and denial.

The following module will help you to understand how low literacy affects people, and be able to recognize some of the common behaviours and cues that may signal low literacy.

The guiding questions in this session are as follows:

- How does low literacy affect people?
- How do you know if someone has low literacy?
- What are the behaviours, verbal and non-verbal cues, that help you know if someone struggles with low literacy?
- How do we know these things? Does this match your experience?

Workshop type: Reading and sharing information from handouts, with small group discussion then sharing with the larger group answers to questions listed at end of each handout.

Amount of time needed: 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Materials: Handouts will be provided (three-page handout)

Number of participants: 8 - 24

How does low literacy affect people?

- People with low literacy can read only short pieces of text and understand a specific piece of information at a time. If text isn't written in clear language and presented in a simple layout, they have trouble understanding it.
- Low literacy means more than having trouble reading marks on paper. People who have weak literacy skills may also have trouble organizing information, following a line of reasoning (even when the information is given orally), and keeping track of a set of instructions.
- Many people with low literacy find it hard to do everyday things that others take for granted. Here are some examples:
 - Parents may not be able to help their children with homework, or to understand letters they receive from the school.
 - People may have difficulty understanding the newspaper, so they don't find out about important community notices and other information.
 - Drivers who get tickets may not be able to understand the instructions on the ticket. This could cause more legal problems for them.
 - People who can't understand contracts and due dates may get into financial and legal difficulties.
 - People who don't read well may avoid reading their mail, which could lead to problems like getting their electricity cut off or not attending at court when required.
 - People who don't understand instructions from the intake staff, lawyer, counsellor, or probation officer can't follow those instructions properly. As a result, their legal problems may get worse instead of better.

Having low literacy skills affects many aspects of a person's life. It can also affect the lives of their spouse, children, neighbours, and co-workers.

Questions:

Can you think of other ways that low literacy can impact a person's life?

From your experience, what behaviours lead you to think that someone is struggling with literacy?

How do you know if someone has low literacy?

Here are some of the signs that may indicate a person has a low level of literacy.

In a verbal interview, a person with low literacy may:

- have difficulty telling a clear story; for example, they may get the order of events confused
- seem to talk in circles – this thinking pattern is common among people with low literacy
- have stiff body language; for example, they may not nod or shake their head to indicate agreement or disagreement
- seem nervous or embarrassed
- seem to lack confidence and be easily intimidated

When asked to read or write something, a person with low literacy may:

- make excuses to avoid the task; for example,
 - “I can’t read this because I forgot my glasses,”
 - “I don’t have time to read this now. Can I take it home?”
 - “I hurt my hand, so I can’t fill out this form.”
- read very slowly
- stare at the page they’re supposed to read, but not move their eyes back and forth
- ask questions about things that are clearly stated in the document
- make a lot of spelling or grammar mistakes in their writing, or fill out a form with incorrect information
- bring a friend or relative with them who helps with reading and writing

People who have difficulty understanding verbal and written information have other tell-tale behaviours.

Many people with low literacy:

- give what seem to be indirect, confused, or irrelevant answers to questions
- act confused or ask questions that do not seem to relate to the problem or situation
- do not ask any questions at all (rather than reveal they don’t understand what’s going on)

- nod to indicate they agree or understand something, but then not do what you expect

They may also:

- not show up for meetings or appointments (because they did not understand the instructions on a written notice)
- sign statements or legal documents that they do not understand (rather than admit they have a reading problem)
- look dazed or uncomfortable when someone gives them something to read

They may show their confusion when they:

- give the impression that they don't understand the seriousness of their situation
- become frustrated and angry easily; they may storm out, or become physically confrontational

When you question if a person has low literacy, remember that:

- Low literacy is more than a reading problem. People with low literacy also have difficulties understanding oral and written information. Many tend to have different thinking strategies and problem-solving approaches.
- People with low literacy skills are likely to understand verbal and written information more slowly than others.
- What seems to be a bad attitude may be a literacy problem.

Source: www.policeabc.ca

Questions:

Do you agree or disagree with the items listed above?

From your own experience of working with clients, can you add anything to this list?

Communication strategies to support people with low literacy

The guiding questions in this session are as follows:

- What are the things we can do to help someone understand and retain important information?
- What are your experiences communicating with someone that you know is having difficulty reading or understanding what they are reading?
- How do we know these things? Does this match your experience?

Workshop type: PowerPoint presentation of key concepts, with a small group discussion then sharing with the larger group.

Amount of time needed: 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Materials: Handouts will be provided (one-page handout under development, as follows)

Number of participants: 8 - 24

What are some helpful ways of working with adults with low literacy skills?

During your interviews, implement any or all of the following ideas:

- Plan to take more time helping your client understand. Some adults with low literacy appear less intelligent. However, research shows that most people with low literacy skills have average or above intelligence. They may process both oral and written information and instructions differently or more slowly than others do. Ask the client how they learn best.
- Remember that an unfamiliar and emotionally fraught situation interferes with everyone's ability to read, listen, and understand.
- Use your finger as a pointer to help guide her eye through the document or form. Pause at important words or phrases. People unfamiliar with reading have difficulty sorting through and making sense of the mass of symbols on the page in front of them.
- Provide new information in a familiar and logical way. Use vocabulary, examples, and comparisons from his or her experience.
- Give the client one or two new ideas at a time. Combine the ideas with something he or she already understands.
- Be sure to check for comprehension. Ask the client to explain the new information to you.
- Whenever possible, practice using open-ended questions that require more than a 'yes' or 'no' answer to get them thinking. Open-ended questions begin with how, why, or what. Keep probing superficial answers with follow-up questions.
- Keep the client active and engaged with the documents by making sure they have a pen or pencil in hand, fills out all that they can on their own, and coach them by guiding and questioning. Keep their hands and mind active. Get the client to talk about the information they are receiving.
- If they ask how to spell a word, print it clearly on a separate sheet of paper. Get them to copy it to the form being filling out.
- Offer to read and discuss difficult or confusing documents aloud. When you read aloud, read slowly and pronounce each word clearly. Stop frequently to check understanding by asking them to tell you the information in their own words. Avoid asking, "Do you understand?" or "Is that clear?" A 'yes' or 'no' answer tells you nothing about what is understood.
- You can refer them to community literacy programs where they can get help reading and understanding.

Question:

Are these suggestions reasonable? If no, how can you change them?

What other tips can you add to this list?

Clear Language and Design for LSS

We will introduce participants to the principles and practice of Clear Language and Design (CLAD) using a short PowerPoint presentation. Then using a workshop approach, we will work with specific LSS PLEI materials to practice the strategies and approaches we have recommended.

The guiding questions in this session are as follows:

- What is clear language and design?
- Who benefits from clear language and design?
- How is it done?

Workshop type: Interactive workshop; key concepts introduced via a PowerPoint presentation and then small group work making revisions to real documents using CLAD principles.

Amount of time needed: 2 - 3 hours

Materials: LSS forms or brochures for CLAD revision practice

Number of participants: 8 - 24

Additional resources:

Clarity Kit – Effective Communication for Municipalities, Part 2: Promoting Clear Communications in Your Municipality. Frequently Asked Questions about Clear Language; Top 10 Clear Writing Tips; Clear Language at Work – Before and After Samples.

1. Know your audience and purpose
2. Organize from the reader's point of view
3. Use meaningful headings and subheadings
4. Use bulleted lists
5. Speak directly to the reader
6. Use strong active verbs
7. Explain specialized language
8. Keep sentences and paragraphs short
9. Don't let the design get in the way
10. Test your document

A Plain English Handbook: How to Create Clear Securities and Exchange Commission Disclosure Documents. This handbook shows how you can use well-established techniques for writing in plain English to create clearer and more informative disclosure documents.

Five-step process to review materials

In Part 1 of this report, we recommended the following:

In order to assist LSS to improve readability of their materials, we would like to recommend a process that takes into account the needs of all readers, while addressing the specific needs of people with low literacy – the five-step process to review materials.

Using a workshop approach and actual PLEI materials, we will train staff in this five-step process. Additional materials describing the individual interview methods in step 4 will be provided at the workshop.

The guiding questions in this session are as follows:

- How can we test the readability of our documents?
- What process can guide us to ensure that we are meeting our needs as LSS and also connecting with the target audience?

Workshop type: Interactive workshop; key concepts introduced via a PowerPoint presentation and then small group work role-playing Stage 4 of the process using real documents using CLAD principles.

Amount of time needed: 1 - 2 hours to introduce the steps. The entire actual process may take a few weeks.

Materials: PLEI materials to be reviewed

Number of participants: 8 - 12

Additional resource:

Toolkit for Making Written Material Clear and Effective, Part 6: How to collect and use feedback from readers. Chapter 4: Five steps for designing a reader feedback session

This document is the fourth of 19 chapters in Part 6 of the *Toolkit for Making Written Material Clear and Effective* (www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Outreach/WrittenMaterialsToolkit/Toolkit-Part-6-Feedback-Sessions.html). The toolkit has 11 parts. It was written for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) by Jeanne McGee, McGee & Evers Consulting, Inc. The guidelines and other parts of the toolkit reflect the views of the writer. CMS offers this Toolkit as practical assistance to help you make your written material clear and effective (not as requirements from CMS).

Step One

1. Set up a reference group that offers different perspectives, include:
 - intake staff and advocates
 - people with low literacy
 - people for whom English is a second language (ESL)
 - experts in adult literacy, ESL, and clear language and design
2. Identify the purpose of the material
 - Who needs to know the information?
 - Why do they need to know it?
 - When do they need to know it?
 - What will they do with the information?
3. Identify the target audience. Consider:
 - age
 - gender
 - language and educational background
 - cultural background
 - factors that could influence comprehension, such as anxiety and low literacy
4. Determine the format
 - brochure
 - booklet
 - guide
 - fact sheet
 - website
 - other

Step Two

1. Write the first draft in clear language.
 - Use the information you have gathered about purpose, target audience, and format to help guide your writing.
 - Use a checklist of guidelines for clear language writing (See sample checklists in Appendix A.).
 - Use a checklist of guidelines for clear organization.
 - Test the material on a readability scale.
2. Collect feedback on your first draft.
 - Ask your reference group to read and comment on your first draft.
 - Make changes to the draft based on feedback.

Step Three

Apply a clear design.

- Use a checklist of guidelines for clear design (see sample checklist in Appendix A).
- Choose an overall design that is simple and easy to read.
- Keep the same consistently clear design throughout.
- Use simple graphic elements to clarify and explain the text.

Step Four

Collect feedback from readers on your final draft.

- Use individual interview methods – for example:
 - ask questions
 - give the reader a task to perform using the material
 - encourage the reader to “think aloud”
 - observe the reader’s behaviour

Step Five

Evaluate the material after it has been in use for a determined amount of time.

- Review the contents, update the information, and revise.
- Test the material with users to make sure it still meets their needs.

Appendix A: Checklist for reviewing publications

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication:

Type of publication:

Target audience:

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?			
2. Is the tone positive?			
3. Is the voice active, not passive?			
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?			
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?			
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?			
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?			
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?			
9. Is the language gender inclusive?			
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?			
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?			
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?			

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication:

Type of publication:

Target audience:

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?			
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?			
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?			
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?			
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?			
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?			
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?			
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?			
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?			

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication:

Type of publication:

Target audience:

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?			
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?			
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?			
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?			
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?			
6. Are italics, ALL CAPS, or underlining used to highlight important information?			
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?			
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?			
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?			
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?			

Appendix B: Completed checklists

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?		x	
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?	x		
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?	x		
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?		x	
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?		x	
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?		x	
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?			?
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?	x		
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?	x		
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?	x		
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?	x		

Comments

Language

- Difficult vocabulary: e.g., “undermine, relay, withholding, believable, breaches”
- Some sentences are long with as many as 38 words, e.g., “While any person can be abused in a relationship, research shows that it is most often women who experience abuse and violence, and the type of violence they experience is most severe, in some cases resulting in death.”
- Paragraphs have 6 or 7 sentences.
- Some glossary definitions are not in plain language, e.g., “Interim Custody Order: A temporary order made by a judge that applies to both parties, until a final order is obtained at trial. It is based on the limited evidence and arguments presented when the order is requested.”
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 50.7 – fairly difficult to read)

Recommendations:

- Although the target audience is intermediaries and advocates, this material could be simplified and rewritten for women who are being abused.

Layout and design

- Not enough white space – margins are less than one inch wide and there are many pages with dense blocks of text. (e.g., pages 12, 50, and 51)
- Italics are used to highlight information: *Get legal advice as soon as possible if your husband assaults you*. Italics are also used for the name of titles, e.g., “...the booklet *Sponsorship Breakdown*.”
- Four small, dark photos of women are scattered throughout the publication. No other device is used to add interest or break up very dense blocks of text.
- Very few bulleted lists are used.
- Some headings use question forms which makes the text more interactive – more could be written in this way.

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above.

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?	x		
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?		x	
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?	x		
9. Is the language gender inclusive?			x
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?	x		
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?	x		
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?	x		
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?		x	
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?	x		
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?		x	
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?			x

Comments

Language

- Some sentences are long and complex with over 30 words per sentence, e.g., “If you do this, be sure to ask for a copy of the **information** (the official court form listing the date, time, place, and type of offence) and the prosecutor’s **initial sentencing position** (a form outlining what sentence the prosecutor will suggest if you plead guilty at an early stage).”
- (Flesch Reading Ease score 70.5 – Fairly easy)

Recommendations:

- Keep one idea per sentence and break up long sentences that have several clauses.
- Avoid using and/or slash – the meaning is confusing for many ESL and readers with low literacy.

Organization and flow of information

Recommendations:

- Many readers with low literacy could find the flow chart on pages 28 and 29 challenging to read and interpret. It requires good navigational skills and familiarity with how to extract information from a decision matrix. Where should you look first? What paths are you supposed to follow? Rather than summarizing and simplifying a process, it may place a heavy cognitive demand on readers with low literacy.
- Suggest a review of the content to find out if there is any possibility of eliminating some of the detail and still have the publication be legally accurate and useful. As it stands, most readers would be overwhelmed by the amount of information.

Layout and design

- Large blocks of text with no relief provided by graphics, headings, or boxes are intimidating even for skilled readers, e.g., pages 10 and 11. Readers with low literacy and little confidence in their reading abilities would probably not even attempt to tackle this text.
- Sidebars set in italics with no caps are distracting and don’t give enough information to be helpful, e.g., “*going to court*” when the heading right next to it is: “When should I go to court?” It would be useful to field test this to find out if it leads readers to actually read the text or simply diverts their attention.

- Long lines of text over 70 characters in some sections
- No graphics to break up the text and add interest
- Not enough white space between headings
- Graphic on page 7 is too small

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above.

Cover: The cover photo is static and uninviting.

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Parents' Rights, Kids' Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?	x		
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?	x		
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?		x	
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Parents' Rights, Kids' Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?	x		
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?	x		
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Parents' Rights, Kids' Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?			?
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?		x	
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?	x		

Comments

Language

- Some sentences are long (38 words) and very difficult, e.g., “The information in this chapter is for Aboriginal parents who have been informed by the ministry or Aboriginal delegated agency that they’re being investigated for a child protection issue, or whose children have been removed from their home.”
- Paragraphs have 6 or 7 sentences.
- Not all glossary definitions are in plain language, e.g., “director”
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 53 – fairly difficult)

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above
- Although the target audience is intermediaries and advocates, this material could be rewritten and made useful for parents.

Organization and flow of information

- The additional information in light font is inconsistent. Sometimes it gives additional information, sometimes it is “See chapter x.” It would be useful to standardize its purpose so that readers would recognize its function.
- Some headings simply state the subject, e.g., “Mediation.” Others are more descriptive and helpful, e.g., “How to contact the child protection worker.”
- The flow charts, for example, on page 22, require a high level of sophistication to interpret. It would be useful to have these field tested by the target audience, and in particular by people with low literacy.

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above

Layout and design

- Not enough white space between headings, e.g., page 8 and 9.
- Font size looks like it is less than 12 point
- Three different fonts are used
- Differences in size of headings and subheadings isn't clear enough
- Sans serif font used for additional information is too light and hard to read
- Photos are used only at the beginning of chapters. The same photos could be cropped, made smaller, and used to break up dense blocks of text within chapters

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning*

Type of publication: Fact sheet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?	x		
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?			x
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?	x		
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning*

Type of publication: Fact sheet Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?			x
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?		x	
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?	x		
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning*

Type of publication: Fact sheet Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?			?
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?	x		
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?			x

Comments

Language:

- There is a mixture of short sentences with a few that are very long, e.g., 59 words.
- Some sentences are complex and have more than one idea.
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 69.1 – standard/average)

Recommendations:

- Information could be rewritten using shorter and less complex sentences.

Layout and design:

- Subject of the fact sheet, the title, should be set all the way across the top
- Side title is difficult to read especially if displayed in a rack
- Screened logo and green screen make the text hard to read
- Colour division (white and green screen) on pages is confusing – where should the reader's eye go first?
- Too much text
- Text is too dense
- No graphics to break up the text and add interest
- Not enough white space between headings
- Titles of other fact sheets with screened bars at the bottom are difficult to read

Recommendations:

- Make it appealing at first glance - convey the message that it is not difficult to read
- Eliminate some of the information
- More white space between headings
- No background colour
- Highlight where to get legal help by boxing or using some other device

- Use black text, except for headings, on white background
- Make the titles of other fact sheets at the bottom of the page a bulleted list and remove screened bars

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *If Your Child is Taken*

Type of publication: Brochure

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?	x		
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?		x	
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?			x
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?	x		
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *If Your Child is Taken*

Type of publication: Brochure

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?			x
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?	x		
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?		x	
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *If Your Child is Taken*

Type of publication: Brochure

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?		?	
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?	x		
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?	x		
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?	x		
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?	x		

Comments

Language

- Some words in bold are not defined, e.g., **Report to Court, order**
- Some sentences are long, e.g., 28 words
- Reading level is too high for the intended readers
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 44 – difficult to read)

Recommendations:

- By simplifying and rewriting, the concerns above would be addressed.
- Change title to:

Your Rights as a Parent

If Your Child is Taken

(reverse the order)

Organization and flow of information

Options – mediation, traditional decision making, and family group conference should each have a heading and definition. Currently, they are buried in a dense block of text.

Recommendations:

- Address the concern stated above

Layout and design

- Font is too small
- Not enough white space around margins and between headings
- Text is too dense
- Italics is used to highlight, e.g., “*get a lawyer immediately.*”

- Not enough devices to break up text, e.g., bulleted lists
- Differences in the levels of headings (headings, subheadings) isn't clear enough
- Screened word "Taken" on same colour reverse doesn't stand out enough

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?		x	
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?		x	
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?	x		
9. Is the language gender inclusive?			x
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?	x		
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?		x	
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?		x	
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?	x		
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?		x	
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?		x	
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?			x

Comments

Language:

- Many sentences are long – 30 to 35 words – and complex, e.g., “Restorative justice is a form of justice that focuses on repairing the harm done by your actions, and gives you and anyone affected by your actions opportunities to heal.”
- Many paragraphs are long – 5 to 8 sentences. These paragraphs have more than one idea. For example: “Aboriginal rights” on page 1 includes rights under the Constitution Act, traditional vs. modern activities, hunting, ancestral territory, harvesting rights and treaty rights.
- Concepts and vocabulary are difficult, e.g., “In the first phase of the trial, the Crown Counsel will have to prove that you committed the elements of the offence beyond a reasonable doubt.”
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 50.9 – fairly difficult)

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above.

Organization and flow of information

- Readers with low literacy levels could find the flow chart on page 9 challenging to read and interpret. It requires good navigational skills and familiarity with how to extract information from a decision matrix. Where should you look first? What paths are you supposed to follow? Rather than summarizing and simplifying a process, it may place a heavy cognitive demand on readers with low literacy.

Recommendations:

- Field test the chart with readers with low literacy.

Layout and design:

- No clear distinction between the font used in the heads and the body type
- Lines of text are too long – often 85 characters per line
- Large logo as background interferes with readability, especially where it is behind a dense block of text, e.g., page 4.

- Page numbers are too small
- No graphics to break up the text and add interest
- Not enough white space between headings
- Differentiation between headings and subheadings is not clear enough

Recommendations:

- Shorter lines of text would allow for ease of reading, provide more opportunities for white space between sections, and balance the amount of text per page
- Dense blocks of text could be broken up with more headings or graphics
- More bulleted lists or text in boxes to break up dense blocks of text to help the reader navigate the text

Cover: There seems to be a disconnect between the attractive glossy cover and the much less appealing inside pages.

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?		x	
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?		x	
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?		x	
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?		x	
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?	x		
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?		x	
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?	x		
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process*

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?	x		
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?		x	
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?	x		
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?			x
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?	x		

Comments

Language

Intended readers include people who want to start a refugee claim. These people have learned or are learning English as a second language. The reading level of this document is much too difficult for these readers. It may also be too difficult for some settlement workers.

- Difficult vocabulary, e.g., “referred to, assists, rejection, attends an appointment, enables”
- Unfamiliar concepts that are not explained, e.g., “living common law, risk to life”
- Sentences are long, many 27 to 30 words, especially on pages 13 to 21
- Paragraphs have 6 or 7 sentences
- Difficult verb tenses, e.g., modals (could)
- ESL learners have difficulty with the meaning of “may” which is used throughout the flowchart. Does it mean permission or probability? For example: You may go to the washroom; It may rain today.
- Definition of the acronyms should be in parenthesis directly after the words – not “also known as”
- Meaning of and/or slash is confusing to many ESL readers “confusing and ambiguous,” according to Strunk and White.
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 48.8 – difficult)

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns above.

Organization and flow of information

- The flowchart (pages 24 and 25) and pages set vertically (pages 15 - 21) break up the flow of information and cause confusion for the reader.
- The flow chart is confusing and difficult to navigate due to the use of too many design elements – white text on grey background, green text on green screen, square boxes, rounded boxes, lozenge-shaped boxes. Even skilled readers would need good navigational

skills and familiarity with how to extract information from a decision matrix to use this flow chart.

Recommendations:

- Field test flow chart with intended audience. Work with an ESL consultant to improve accessibility for refugee claimants and settlement workers.

Layout and design

- There are too many design elements in a book of this size
- Reverses in green are hard to read and there are too many of them
- Arrow design at the top and sides of pages is unnecessary and distracting
- Photos should be bigger, printed in black and white, and used to break up text and add interest
- Green type is too light and difficult to read
- Screened headings are difficult to read
- Decorative script, e.g., “What is a an eligibility interview” is distracting
- Not enough white space between headings.

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above.

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Welfare Rights* (and Update)

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Language guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the tone friendly and personal (you, we) to engage the reader?	x		
2. Is the tone positive?	x		
3. Is the voice active, not passive?	x		
4. Is the vocabulary simple and familiar, not formal?		x	
5. Are definitions of legal vocabulary that readers need to know provided in plain language?	x		
6. Is a glossary provided if there are terms that readers need to know?		x	
7. Are acronyms, abbreviations, and initialisms avoided where possible, and if used, spelled out the first time they are used?	x		
8. Are English idioms and idiomatic speech used sparingly, or not at all?		x	
9. Is the language gender inclusive?	x		
10. Are sentences short (15 to 20 words) with one idea per sentence?		x	
11. Are paragraphs short (3 to 4 sentences) with one idea per paragraph?		x	
12. Is the reading level appropriate for the target audience?		x	

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Welfare Rights* (and Update)

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Organization and flow of information guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is the purpose of the publication stated clearly near the beginning?	x		
2. Is there a table of contents to help readers understand how the publication is organized and to help them find information easily?	x		
3. Is the publication divided into short sections with clear headings?	x		
4. Are there frequent sub-headings to help readers scan through the text and pull out the key messages?		x	
5. Are headings and sub-headings a different size and typestyle from the body text?	x		
6. Is the most important information at the beginning of each section?	x		
7. Is important information highlighted with bold print or text boxes?	x		
8. Are bulleted lists used to avoid long sentences or paragraphs?	x		
9. Is information presented in a logical order: step-by-step, most important to least important?	x		

Checklist for Reviewing Publications: Legal Services Society

Name of publication: *Your Welfare Rights* (and Update)

Type of publication: Booklet

Target audience: See Appendix C

Layout and design guideline	Yes	No	N/A
1. Is there adequate white space: wide margins, space between paragraphs, headings, and sections?		x	
2. Is the left margin justified and the right ragged?	x		
3. Is there hyphenation at the ends of lines?		x	
4. Is the font size 12 point or larger with leading of 2 points or more?	x		
5. Are lines between 50 and 60 characters or less?		x	
6. Are <i>italics</i> , ALL CAPS, or <u>underlining</u> used to highlight important information?		x	
7. Are there no more than two standard fonts used: one font for headings and one for the body text?		x	
8. Does the publication use dark print on a light background?		x	
9. Are graphics used to break up dense text and to reinforce or replace written information?		x	
10. Are drawings (if used) simple and realistic and used to illustrate key points?	x		
11. Do photos (if used) reflect the gender, culture, and age of the target audience?			x

Comments

Language

- Some sentences are long and difficult with more than 35 - 40 words, e.g., “If you get child support or spousal support (also called maintenance), the ministry will treat it as income and deduct it from you check unless it is maintenance awarded for an adult child or a person with a disability that you pass on to them (see “Unearned income exemptions” on page 86).”
- No glossary
- Some difficult words are not explained, e.g., “retroactive”, “condemned”
- (Flesch Reading Ease score: 43.4 – difficult)

Recommendations:

- This is a long book with a high level of detail. Suggest keeping it as resource and writing a shorter, easier to read guide.
- The reading level is too high for readers who have difficulty with reading or whose first language is not English
- Rewrite headlines as questions

Layout and design

- Not enough white space, e.g., pages 46, 74, 102, and 103.
- Some blue screens are too dark, e.g., page 37
- Text in some charts is too small and too light, e.g., page 112
- Hierarchy of headings may not be obvious to readers

Recommendations:

There are few incentives to read this book. In order to make it more inviting and to get away from the look of a textbook, you could:

- include more line drawings to break up text and illustrate points.
- provide more white space throughout.

- improve the readability of charts by increasing the font size and weight.
- break up dense blocks of text with headings, drawings, boxes or other devices.

Note: There are a few elements that would be useful to keep, e.g., blue screened information for Persons with Disabilities and Tips. The tips could be boxed in order to be more visible for a reader who is scanning for information.

Updates to Your Welfare Rights

Language

- No explanation or glossary for difficult words and terms, e.g., “indictable” or “hybrid offence”
- Many sentences have more than 35 words. See length of second sentence in first bullet on page 13 as an example.

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above

Layout and design

- Lines of text are too long – more than 75 characters per line
- Table 1 in double spread is difficult to navigate – topics aren’t clearly set apart for ease of scanning.
- Long URLs in text, like the one on page 7, are a problem.
- Blue text on a blue screen is too difficult to read, e.g., page 7

Recommendations:

- Address the concerns stated above

Appendix C: List of LSS print and online PLEI materials reviewed

List of LSS print and online PLEI materials (in priority) for Decoda to review

Area of Law	Title	Target audience
Family law: family violence	<i>Surviving Relationship Violence and Abuse</i>	Intermediaries and advocates helping people who have experienced abuse by an intimate partner. Individuals who have experienced abuse by an intimate partner.
Criminal law	<i>Representing Yourself in a Criminal Trial</i>	LSS criminal law clients, intermediaries in the courts, LSS intake workers.
Family law: child protection	<i>Parents' Rights, Kids' Rights</i>	Poverty law and family law advocates and intermediaries. Possibly some clients who have had or are in danger of having their children taken by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).
Family law: family violence	<i>Live Safe – End Abuse: Safety Planning</i>	Women who have experienced relationship violence. There is a wide variation in the potential audience of this one. Intermediaries involved in distribution.
Family law: child protection	<i>If Your Child Is Taken...</i>	LSS clients who have had their children taken by MCFD or are in danger of having their children taken.
Aboriginal law	<i>Are You Aboriginal?</i>	Aboriginal criminal law clients. Some lawyers might also use.
Aboriginal law	<i>A Guide to Aboriginal Harvesting Rights</i>	Advocates, intermediaries, LSS intake workers. Aboriginal criminal law clients.

Immigration law	<i>Your Guide to the Refugee Claim Process</i>	Settlement workers and intermediaries. LSS immigration clients.
Civil law	<i>Your Welfare Rights</i>	Poverty law advocates and intermediaries. Individuals on welfare.

Product	Subject	Target audience
Self-help guide	How to do your own undefended divorce (sole application) in Supreme Court	uncontested divorce applicants and intermediaries
Self-help guide	How to change a final family order in Supreme Court – if you and the other party can't agree	general self-represented litigants and intermediaries
FAQ	Support – child	intermediaries and general public
Fact sheet	Checklist of information to include in an affidavit	intermediaries and general public
Definitions	legal terminology commonly used	intermediaries and general public

Product	Subject	Target audience
Legal aid info: Financial qualification guidelines	Do I qualify for legal representation?	legal aid applicants, general public

Appendix D: Website materials reviewed

Family Law in BC website materials

Self-help guide: How to do your own undefended divorce (sole application) in Supreme Court

Language

Recommendations:

- Define important words that might not be known by all users, e.g., undefended/uncontested, file (for divorce), claim, assets, adultery
- Explain self-help guide, e.g., “this guide can help you if....”
- Rewrite and simplify many pop-up definitions
- Put short cuts in alpha order
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 44.7 – difficult to read)

Layout and Design

- Words “Text Size” difficult to read - white text on light background
- White text on photo background on banner is difficult to read

Recommendations:

- Use black font on white background
- Change white text on photo background

Navigation

- Navigating the List of Steps is complicated, with many links. Even users who are familiar with how websites work would probably be discouraged early on. Users with few skills would be overwhelmed.
- The vast amount of information and number of links in Step 1 may prevent users from proceeding further.
- The “Tips” and “Important” boxes are helpful. There may be ways to build on these features to help users.

How to change a final family order in the Supreme Court of BC – If you and the other party can't agree (self-help guide)

Language

- Long sentences with complex structure, e.g., “If you were married and you applied for a divorce plus other things like custody, access, guardianship, or support under both the Family Relations Act and the Divorce Act, but your order doesn't specify which act the order was made under, the law assumes it was made under the Divorce Act. [Section 17 of the Divorce Act](#) governs all applications to change an order.”
- “Notice to mediate (family) regulation” and “Information about applying for mediation” pages are particularly difficult to understand.
- Difficult vocabulary is not defined, e.g., pilot project, registry, restraining order, peace bond, exempt
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 44.3 – difficult to read)

Recommendations:

- Define or make clear from context non-legal terms that may be difficult for second language readers or readers with low literacy, e.g., resolve, impose, family dynamics, served (a form), mandatory, guardianship
- Long, complex sentence can be shortened and made clearer

Layout and Design

- Difficult to read white text against green background
- *Italics* are hard to read on many computer screens
- Small font size, unable to increase size with Text Size tool at the top of the page

Recommendations:

- Use black font on white background
- PDFs should be clearly formatted and easy to read
- Mediators page could be broken up by using bullets or some other chunking device

Frequently Asked Questions: FAQs

Language

- The reading level of the questions is much easier than the answers (explanations).
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 71.1 – fairly easy)

Recommendations:

- Suggest simplifying the language and shortening the answers, if possible.
- Instead of “support – child” say “child support”
- Add “FAQ” after “Frequently asked questions.”

Note: Answers based on real scenarios make complex issues more accessible and understandable.

Design and layout

- “Resize text” is too small and difficult to read – white on light coloured background
- White text on green background is difficult to read on a computer screen

Recommendations:

Black text on white or light background

Navigation

- Navigating this page is difficult. It is confusing to click out of the main page to so many different websites and documents.

Recommendations:

- Provide the phone number of the LSS Call Centre, local legal aid office, and how to find a lawyer at the top of the page so users can call directly with their questions, and note that an interpreter is available for people who don’t speak English.
- Move “Still got a question?” to the top of the page, under “Child Support” and revise it, e.g., “If you don’t see your question in the FAQs below, please email us (provide email address). In your email, please tell us your question, where you live in BC, and the level of court involved (Provincial or Supreme), if applicable. We may add your question (without your name or personal details) and our answer to the FAQ pages.”
- Organize the questions according to topic
- Suggest highlighting this helpful document *Living Together or Living Apart*, available in eight languages, on the main page as users might not go to the question which links to it.

Checklist of Information to include in an Affidavit or present in court

Language

- Question format, e.g., “Where did you live when you were together?” is easier than non-question format, e.g., “List the children’s extracurricular activities or special interests, if any.”
- Pop up definitions vary in difficulty
- Idiomatic vocabulary and expressions that may be difficult for people who speak English as second language (e.g., bare facts, bulk of the work, upbringing, and corporal punishment).
- Words that may be difficult for some people with low literacy or for people who speak English as a second language are not defined, e.g., assets, debts, intimidation, harsh corporeal punishment, neglect
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 54.4 – fairly difficult to read)

Recommendations:

Address the concerns above.

Layout and design

- Many lines of text have 92 characters which are too long for comfortable reading on a computer screen. Compare this web page with the Do I qualify for legal representation? web page to see the difference that the long lines of text make as far as ease of reading.

Recommendations:

- Shorter lines of text and more white space overall
- The downloadable affidavit checklist is an excellent resource. Suggest moving it up the page so that the reader who doesn’t scroll down to the bottom of the page doesn’t miss it.

Definitions – Family Law

Language:

- Some definitions are too difficult, e.g., “Special expenses are extra expenses for a child over and above the regular cost of living, such as child care expenses while the recipient works or goes to school or is ill or disabled, medical and dental insurance premiums specifically for the child, health-related expenses that exceed insurance reimbursement by at least \$100 annually, and expenses for post-secondary education. Extraordinary expenses are expenses for education, programs, or extracurricular activities that meet the child's needs, such as tutoring or private school, or, possibly, for other activities in which the child excels and is shown to be particularly gifted.”
- Definitions with examples are easier to understand
- (Flesch Reading Ease Score: 58.3 – fairly difficult)

Recommendations:

- Review all definitions and try to simplify those that are very long and difficult.
- Use examples where possible to clarify meaning.

Layout and design:

- Lines of text (92 characters) are too long. If the lines are too long it may be difficult for users to locate the beginning of the line that follows. Compare this web page with the web page [Do I qualify for legal representation?](#) to see the difference that the long lines of text make as far as ease of reading.
- Amount of white space is good.

Recommendations:

- Decrease the length of the lines.
- Add information so readers can phone if they still need help or have questions after reading the definitions.

Do I qualify for legal representation? (as found on the LSS website)

Language:

- (Flesch Reading Ease: 43.5 - difficult to read)

Recommendations:

- Define “qualify” or rephrase question at top of page to; “Am I able to get legal representation?”
- Define “assets” the first time it appears in the first paragraph.
- In the second paragraph, include a link to legal aid offices where it says: “it’s best to come into a **legal aid office** and apply”
- Is the term “legal aid rules” defined anywhere? Every time I clicked on it I got sent in a circle.
- 16-page PDF “Notice to Mediate (Family) Regulation” is extremely long and difficult to read.

Layout and design:

- Lines of text here are a good length and are easy to read.
- White text and logo on photo background are difficult to read.
- Resize text is too small and difficult to read – white on light-coloured background

Navigation:

- How to apply for legal aid web page includes lots of helpful information and it would be useful to link to this web page directly from the Financial qualification guidelines web page. As it is now, the information is buried.
- “Need help in another language?” should be given more prominence – make it easier to find sooner.

Appendix E: General overview of all intake locations visited

		A	B	C	N/A
	Office environment				
1	Our reception area is clearly marked. <i>Court house offices - There are no reception areas</i>	✓			
2	The atmosphere in our reception area is friendly. People feel they can ask for help without embarrassment.		✓		
3	We provide a quiet, private space for clients to fill out forms or participate in interviews. ^T		✓		
	Application procedures				
4	We offer all clients the same help and choices.	✓			
5	We have simplified our application or admission procedures so we get the essential information at the first meeting and the details at subsequent meetings.		✓		
6	We ask all clients if they need access to a translator/interpreter in order to use our services, or they have a preferred translator/interpreter who they like to use.	✓			
7	We accommodate clients who may want or need to bring friends, Elders, or spokespersons to their meeting with our staff. <i>Did not observe this.</i>				
	Service delivery				
8	We ask all clients how they would like to receive information from us.			✓	
9	When appropriate for our client's needs, we have the same information available in visual, written and auditory formats.		✓		
10	We offer clients various ways to fill in a form or access our services.		✓		

11	Our website has clear, easy-to-follow instruction on how to fill out, print, and send forms to us.				✓
12	We explain, in plain language, each point in our consent forms to ensure informed consent.		✓		
13	We use various methods to orient clients to our services.			✓	
14	We regularly ask our clients for feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services and application processes.				?
	Communicating with clients				
15	We use a welcoming, respectful tone when speaking with all of our clients.	✓			
16	With each initial client interaction, we provide a brief overview of our services, giving only the essential information.		✓		
17	At subsequent appointments, we review with all clients the information gathered at the previous appointment(s) to check our mutual understanding.	✓			
18	We use gestures, body language, drawings, models and demonstrations to enhance our communication with clients.				✓
	Service delivery				
19	When appropriate, we learn second language equivalents for some of the key English words which describe our services.	✓			
20	When using an interpreter, we are careful to focus on the clients as we interact, not the interpreter.		✓		
21	When using an interpreter, we leave additional time for the client to ask questions or ask to have information repeated.	✓			
22	We offer the interpreter breaks during appointments to ensure the optimum level of language translation.				?

March 2012

Name of Office: LSS

Clear Verbal Communication

		A	B	C	N/A
	Facilitating understanding				
1	We use plain language and the same key words when describing our services whether in speaking with clients, in our written materials, or on our website.	✓			
2	We have identified the jargon and technical vocabulary important for clients to know and have developed an easy way to explain these words.		✓		
3	We keep instructions brief and deliver them in step-by-step sequence.	✓			
4	We are careful not to speak more loudly when it appears that a client does not understand what we have said.	✓			
5	We are prepared to repeat information if it appears that a client does not understand what we have said.	✓			
6	We are prepared to use alternative vocabulary if it appears that a client does not understand what we have said.		✓		
7	We speak at a normal unhurried rate and clearly enunciate the words we use when we work with clients for whom English is an additional language.	✓			
	Voicemail				
8	Our voicemail or messaging system has a prompt to reach a "real" person in the first menu.				✓
9	We follow plain language guidelines when creating the messages for our voicemail system or leaving messages with clients.		✓		

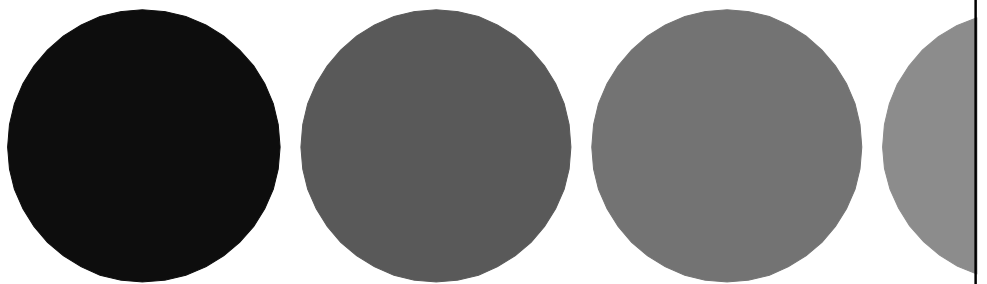
10	Our voicemail or messaging system is spoken at a normal unhurried rate given that some clients may speak English as an additional language.		✓		
	Conversations and interviewing				
11	We pause after each key point in a conversation to allow our clients time to process the information and form questions.		✓		
12	We allow clients plenty of time to answer questions. We accept silence and do not interrupt the client's thought processes to ask for a response immediately after the questions is asked.	✓			
13	Our conversations include open-ended questions, which allow clients time to more fully express their needs.	✓			
14	We regularly pause to check for mutual understanding between our clients and ourselves.		✓		
15	We briefly review all of the information we have given clients at the end of each conversations, paying particular attention to repeating key words and phrases.		✓		
16	We give clients plain language handouts which duplicate the most important verbal information we have discussed.			✓	

Appendix F: Bulletin board design and maintenance

Bulletin board design and maintenance

Bulletin boards are important communication tools. Keeping them uncluttered and current should be someone's job. A readable bulletin board has a predictable organization and structure. Place items posted to the board according to that structure. This will help readers find items they need or want to read.

1. Create a basic layout on paper before making the actual bulletin board.
2. Decide on standard categories for the information you need to display.
3. Post bold headings for each category.
 - a. Use a large font and capitalize only the first letter of words.
 - b. Consider laminating headings and other visual elements (trim, art, icons) that will be more permanent. They will appear more formal and last longer.
 - c. Differentiate the categories using visual clues such as paper colour, familiar icons or pictures. Pick one colour or icon for each category of information and use this consistently throughout the bulletin board. **Caution:** avoid bright coloured or patterned paper. Print shows up better on pastel colours.
4. Organize the headings on the bulletin board. The placement of the categories provides the structure for the board.
 - a. Use dark trim (or colour-coded) edges between categories
 - b. Use irregularly shaped sections (e.g., some squares, some rectangles)
5. The eye goes to negative space to rest and make sense of the information presented. So, leave space between items.
6. Fix all corners of items to the board, so the document is flat on the surface to read.
7. Create each item on the board using clear language and design principles.
8. If you are posting documents or forms, give them definition by adding a large, easy-to-see title that identifies the topic and the audience.
9. Keep the information on the board current.
 - a. Add interest to your board.
 - b. Create a category for daily or weekly items of interest and keep them changing regularly.
10. Take a photo of your bulletin board for future reference
11. Treat all of your office walls and windows as if they are bulletin boards.



habañero

Research findings and recommendations
Family Law in BC website

Prepared by Barbara Richards

April 5, 2012 Version 1.0

Legal Services Society

Family Law in BC website



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1 Summary of this document

This document outlines priorities and recommendations for LSS's Family Law in BC website (FLWS). It is based on several research activities designed to determine how the website could best serve its target audiences.

2 Context of the FLWS

2.1 Mission and vision of the Legal Services Society (LSS)

LSS's mission is to provide innovative and integrated services that enable clients to effectively address their legal issues in a broad social context. Its vision is a British Columbia where all people are able to find timely and lasting solutions to their legal issues that improve their quality of life.

2.2 Legal aid services and the role of the Family Law website (FLWS)

LSS provides legal aid services. The range of services available falls under three areas:



1. **Legal representation** (a lawyer paid by Legal Aid to take a client's whole case).
2. **Legal advice** is brief, legal advice on a specific part of a case. It involves applying the law to a particular situation, and providing a legal opinion and specific advice about the best course of action.

3. **Legal information.** This is general information about the law that helps someone identify a legal issue and the options that might be available to address that issue. It can be delivered through publications, websites, answers to email questions, or other means of delivering information.

The FLWS plays an important role in providing **legal information**.

2.3 Why is the FLWS important?

The FLWS provides a large volume of legal information. This is important because legal representation, and to a lesser degree, legal advice, is quite limited for family law issues.

In order to qualify for legal representation, an applicant must have either an emergency situation or a serious denial of access to children, in addition to a low income.

Qualifying for legal advice is less restricted, but is still limited to people with lower incomes and normally requires a person to resolve family issues on their own to some degree. There is also limited support for community advocates to assist people with family law issues.

Many British Columbians with family law issues are therefore left with limited legal assistance. Because the cost of hiring lawyers can be prohibitive for many people, the FLWS can play an important role in helping people with family law issues navigate the legal system.

The FLWS also plays an important role in assisting intermediaries and other professionals (e.g., family justice workers, community workers, etc.) perform their duties in assisting their clients with their family law issues.

By enabling people to understand their family law issues better, the website has the potential for people to make the best use of time that is available from professionals and intermediaries. It can then also to free up professionals and intermediaries to serve clients in other ways.

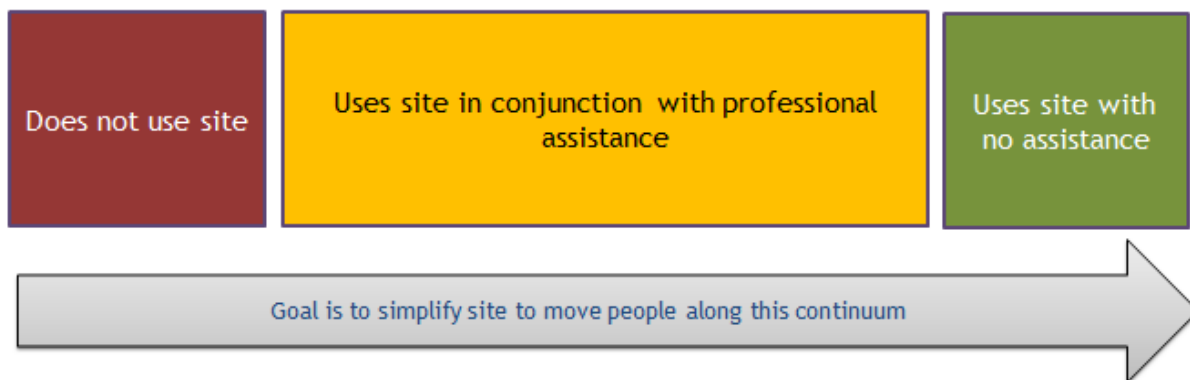
2.4 Level of assistance required by the general public

It appears that the website currently works quite well for intermediaries and professionals familiar with family law.

However, many (if not most) members of the general public require some assistance in using the website and addressing their legal issue. This is due to several reasons:

- The nature of online text-based legal information prevents people with general or web literacy challenges from using the site.
- Understanding legal information requires a certain level of investment of time. Quick answers cannot always be provided.
- Situations can be unique or complex and legal information best covers typical cases and situations.
- Usability issues prevent people from identifying and finding the information relevant to them (e.g., dense content, lack of headings, un-intuitive navigation choices, etc.) that are addressed in this document.

Factors affecting people's ability to use the FLWS independently



Does not use website – factors	Uses website with assistance – factors	Uses website with no assistance – factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• has lawyer• general and web literacy challenges are high• health challenges (e.g., mental health, vision, dyslexia)• complex legal issues• does not know about or is not able to find site• no internet access• website usability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of familiarity with legal system• limited legal help• some general and web literacy challenges• some health challenges• somewhat complex legal issues• limited internet access• website usability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• high general and web literacy• professional knowledge (e.g., intermediary)• motivated• relatively simple situation (e.g., amicable divorce)• good internet access• website usability

2.5 Purpose and goals of the FLWS

The overall purpose of the FLWS is to assist British Columbians with family law issues by providing them with legal information to help them understand their legal issue, navigate the court system, and be able to apply the law in order to obtain fair results for their cases.

Currently, it appears that many end-users (LSS clients and non-clients who are not familiar with the law) require the assistance of intermediaries or professionals to use the site. They either need to be pointed to the right information or guided through the site.

A major goal of the website is to continue to improve its usability to enable as many people as possible to use the website without assistance.

2.6 Audiences

Three main audiences have been identified for the FLWS. Note that these include generalized observations, and there are likely to be differences between individual people and situations.

2.6.1 Community workers and intermediaries

This audience includes lawyers, librarians, family justice counsellors, social workers, and related professionals (e.g., staff at transition houses) and staff at MLA offices.

Members of this audience are usually familiar with the topic of family law, are often familiar with the Family Law in BC website, are motivated to learn more, and are easy to communicate with. They use the website to assist clients with a range of family law issues.

Research activities indicated that, in general, they find the website extremely valuable due to its comprehensive content and easy-to-understand language. They use it regularly on behalf of their clients and often refer their clients to specific parts of it.

However, many intermediaries also believe the website is too difficult for their clients to use due to usability issues, which are noted later in this report, and/or web and general literacy challenges.

2.6.2 LSS clients

This audience includes people who use the services of both LSS and advocates.

Members of this audience often have lower literacy levels, social and health issues, and low incomes.

Research activities indicated that, in general, they were interested in using the FLWS but varied widely in their ability to do so.

2.6.3 British Columbians with family law issues who are not LSS clients

This audience includes people who are not LSS clients and have chosen not to use a lawyer (often for financial reasons).

Research activities (in this case primarily listening labs with British Columbians and web analytics) indicate the following about many people in this audience:

- Divorce is often the main legal issue. However, there are many other family law issues related to divorce (e.g., child support and custody) that are also relevant.
- There is interest in searching online to get information about family law issues.
- There is a lack of familiarity with LSS, and by extension the FLWS.
- There is an interest in reading official information produced or sanctioned by the government.
- There is interest in “do-it-yourself” type of information.

2.6.4 Other audiences

Among these audiences, there are also people with specific information needs, such as Aboriginal people and immigrants. Some findings and recommendations related to these audiences are included later in this report.

2.7 Research activities

Findings and recommendations in this report are based on several research and review activities.

1. **Business orientation** (Overview and context for the FLWS between Habañero and LSS staff who work with the FLWS).
2. **Review of the FLWS website** from a heuristic/best practices point of view by Habañero.
3. **Stakeholder interviews.** These were short interviews with a range of people with an interest in the website (e.g., staff at the Courthouse Libraries, a staff member at the Justice Access Centre, duty counsel, and Family Justice counsellors) about their interactions, if any, with the FLWS, and strengths and weaknesses of the site.
4. **Listening labs.** These were sessions conducted with intermediaries (5 participants), LSS clients (7 participants), and British Columbians with family law issues (4 participants) to directly observe how they interact with the FLWS to meet their needs. Areas explored in these sessions included:
 - relevant legal issues
 - how the participant would search for family law information, and what sites they would like to find
 - use of the FLWS
 - time permitting, feedback on related sites (Clicklaw, JP Boyd's Family Law Resource, New Brunswick family law website, etc.).

The goal of the sessions was to observe as natural a situation as possible. Participants were asked to behave as naturally as possible, and share their thoughts about what they were looking for and the family law information they were viewing.

5. **Review of online surveys.** A number of surveys have been conducted that collectively provided feedback from over 1200 people. These included the 4Q survey (850+ respondents), the Divorce Survey (250+ respondents), and the current (online as of April 2012) general survey (180+ respondents).
6. **Review of analytics.** Google Analytics were reviewed for general traffic patterns and areas of interest.
7. **Review of other material.** In addition to the above, LSS provided other material (e.g., mobile plans, fundraising strategy, personas, previous usability testing reports, etc.).

3 Findings and recommendations

This section includes findings and recommendations identified during the research activities. Note that these include generalized observations, and there are likely to be differences between individual people and situations.

3.1 Quality of information

Survey responses, interviews, and listening labs all strongly indicated that the quality of information on the FLWS is high because it is:

- complete and comprehensive (as much as can be reasonably expected for a topic that varies case by case);
- updated and current;
- accurate and reliable; and
- addresses important issues.

The quality of the information is also evidenced by how often some intermediaries reference and use the site. While the frequency of use of the website depends on an intermediary's client base, the website was appreciated by almost all the intermediaries that provided feedback.

Recommendation

- Continue providing high-quality comprehensive information.

3.2 General guidelines for displaying content

While the quality of information is appreciated, information also needs to be easy to scan on the FLWS in order to support people identifying information relevant to them and moving through the site.

Recommendation

- Use a default font that is as large as possible. While the font chosen will affect the size required, the minimum size font should be 12 pt.
- Use large headings that describe the content of sections of page and include white space between the heading and text.
- Use the right column of pages to call-out secondary or supporting information to key content (e.g., "Who can help" for forms should be in the right column, the forms are in the page content).

Related wireframes

- 2.1 - Legal issue fact sheet
- 4.0 - Forms landing page (to illustrate right call-outs)

3.2.1 Related project: literacy review (Decoda project)

It is recommended to look for opportunities from lessons learned the Decoda project, a literacy review of print, online, and in-person communications. For example, headings and language used in print publications could be incorporated online.

The final Decoda literacy review report contains recommendations for clear language. The recommendations are primarily focused on information communicated by means other than the FLWS, but the guidelines for clear language should be incorporated into creating content for the FLWS.

3.3 Search Engine Optimization and finding the FLWS

The listening labs with British Columbians and web analytics strongly show that it is very easy to find the FLWS if the person looking for it knows of its existence. The website shows up on the first page of many relevant searches (e.g., *family law BC*).

However, if a person is not familiar with LSS website or the FLWS at the time of searching, it is difficult for them to distinguish the FLWS among other for-profit or less reliable sites in the search results.

When searching, people were interested in government and official sites, but did not recognize the FLWS as a government or official website in the search results. They typically clicked into websites they recognized from the Attorney General (AG) or the Government of Canada. Web analytics also show that approximately 5 percent of all visits to the FLWS come from the Attorney General website. These visits also have a low bounce rate (21 percent) and view a higher than average number of pages (7.6). This reinforces the observation that people who are interested in the type of information on the FLWS often visit the AG website before visiting the FLWS.

In all cases during the listening labs, people had to be guided to the FLWS.

It was also observed that people tended to use search terms specific to their issue (e.g., Do your own divorce, custody, etc.), as opposed to more general terms (e.g., family law).

Recommendations

- Include “We are non-profit and funded by the Attorney General of BC” in the meta tags for the site. These often show up in search results.
- Since much of the target audience is visiting the AG website while researching their family law issue, request higher profile linking from the AG website.

3.4 Arriving at the FLWS

When people not familiar with the FLWS first visited the site (all the non-intermediaries), they were not usually familiar with LSS, or able to immediately determine that the website was non-profit or official.

Further, one participant, who was searching on behalf of helping his mother with her divorce did not see the term “divorce” when arriving at the site, understood the reference to “helping

families using the law” to mean the website was only for people with children and did not expect the website to have the do-it-yourself divorce information he was looking for.

Participants were typically interested in self-help and do-it-yourself information when they arrived at the site. Everyone also needed or wanted to find out about legal aid and/or contact a professional, such as duty counsel or family justice counsellors to ask questions.

All ESL participants directly visited the “Multilingual” section.

Many intermediaries or people further along in the process of working out their family law issue come to the website to access court forms.

Recommendations

- Create a homepage and global navigation that ensures people can easily see the following when they arrive at the site:
 - links to information for their topic (e.g., divorce) or community (e.g., Aboriginal, immigrants)
 - the site is official, can be trusted, and is non-profit
 - that they can do things themselves here
 - court forms
 - services and people who can help them
 - language options

Related wireframe

- 1.0 Homepage and global navigation

3.5 Finding and identifying information

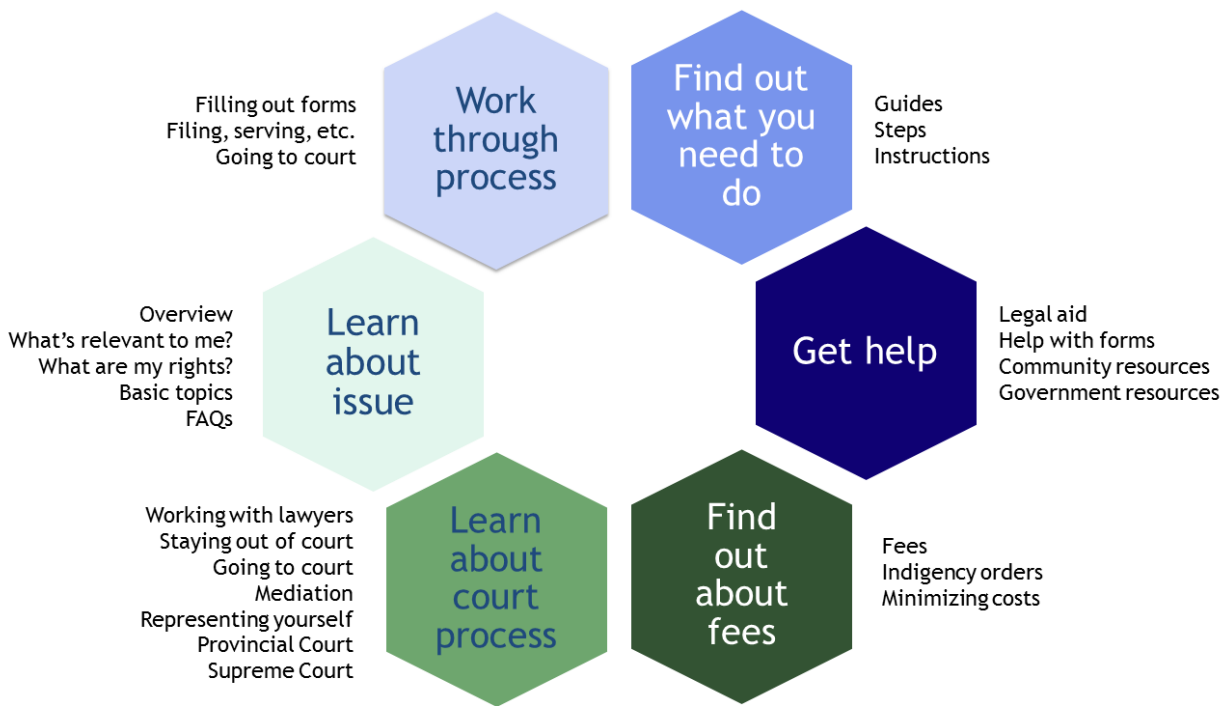
While the FLWS performs well for intermediaries who are familiar with the content, it is difficult for the general public to navigate through the volume of information on the site.

In particular, it is challenging for people to:

- scan information to identify what is relevant to them, and
- avoid being overwhelmed with large amounts of dense information on pages.

3.5.1 Key tasks and topics of interest

The following key tasks and topics of interest relevant to people were identified:



Recommendations

- Revise the global Information Architecture and website content to support key areas of interest.
- Reduce the amount of information on pages (e.g., Basics about a legal issue).
- Include headings to help people identify what is relevant to them (e.g., FAQs, Self-help guides).

Related wireframes

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation
- 2.0 - Legal issues landing page
- 2.1 - Legal issues FAQs – Default page
- 2.5 - Legal issues – Do it yourself

3.5.2 Legal issues and key content pages (Basics, FAQs, Do it yourself)

The concept of providing information by legal issue tested very well among all audiences. It appears that when people have a legal issue, they know it. Therefore, providing information by legal issue is quite intuitive. It was also noted above that people often search for information using their legal issue as a keyword when they are searching in Google.

Recommendations

- Keep the “Legal issues” area in the global navigation.
- Expose legal issues content on the homepage so visitors to the website can immediately see their issue is addressed on the website.
- Work on improving the layout, organization, and creation of headings in the legal issues section to increase the usability of that section.

Related wireframes

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation
- 2.0 - Legal issues landing page
- 2.1 - Legal issues FAQs – Default page
- 2.5 - Legal issues – Do it yourself

3.5.3 Community

Similar to the “Legal issues” area, this area of the website tested well among the people it was relevant to (Aboriginal people or immigrants).

Recommendations

- Keep the “Community” area in the global navigation.
- Work on improving the layout, organization, and creation of headings for the pages in this section (Basics, FAQs, Do it yourself) as seen in the legal issues wireframes.

Related wireframes

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation
- 2.0 - Legal issues landing page
- 2.1 - Legal issues FAQs – Default page
- 2.5 - Legal issues – Do-it-yourself

3.6 Self-help guides

Because different self-help guides are relevant to different people and longer guides take time to work through (such as the divorce guide), individual guides were not tested in-depth.

However, the following was observed:

- People appreciate listing the steps required.
- There is not enough information for everyone to determine whether they should choose the Sole application or Joint application in the divorce guide (i.e., not enough information to make the right choice).

- People appreciated “Who this guide is for” information. However, when people noticed their situation fell under “Who this guide is not for”, no alternative for them was given (i.e., a dead end).
- Sometimes tips with the light purple background were not noticed (e.g., on the “Who this guide is for – Sole application” page).

Recommendations:

- Preface the guides with information that clearly states who the guide is for, with alternatives when a guide is not applicable.
- Incorporate information that helps people identify the guide they need within the “Do-it-yourself” section (use content from the existing “Which guide should I choose” page).
- Clearly show the steps within guides.
- Include tips and important information in an area with more white space for visibility.

Related wireframe

- 2.6 - Self-help guide

3.7 Forms

Forms are high priority for all audiences. They are essential to the court process and used by all audience groups once they are past the initial learning stage. Intermediaries often use and refer clients to forms daily.

Filling out forms can also be difficult and are time-consuming. It can also be hard for unrepresented people to identify the forms needed, find them, and use them.

People also found sample forms to be very helpful.

Recommendations

- Revise the forms page to support finding forms and related resources.
- Highlight and link to forms in context whenever relevant (e.g., as is done in self-help guides).
- Facilitate location of sample forms.

Related wireframes

- 4.0 - Court forms landing page
- 4.1 - Individual form page

3.8 Who can help

People often need to contact someone for reassurance that they are doing the right thing, to get help identifying the right resource (e.g., finding a form or person to contact), or to get brief advice about their particular situation.

Almost everyone did not understand how limited legal aid was and had not thought of legal aid as being anything other than legal representation.

Because the “Who can help” page is not prominent, people generally did not notice it. Another issue was that the “Who can help” landing page requires people to click into each link to understand what each service is about and whether it is relevant to them.

Recommendations

- Include “Get help” in the global navigation.
- Surface more information on the “Get help” page.
- Include highly visible legal aid information on the “Get help” page.

Related wireframe

- 5.0 - Get help landing page

3.9 Aboriginal people

Two LSS clients who were Aboriginal and one intermediary who was Aboriginal and worked on behalf of Aboriginal people participated in the listening labs.

It is expected that the majority of findings directly related to Aboriginal people will be contributed by the Aboriginal Online Strategy report. However, the following general observations were noted in these sessions:

- In-person contact was preferred to finding information online, but participants clearly saw the practical benefits of accessing information online.
- Information relevant to Aboriginal people is often different from information relevant to non-Aboriginal people (e.g., dividing property on First Nations land, different agencies and services are often available for Aboriginal people).
- For the participants in the listening labs, an intermediary was needed due to the presence of multiple, complex issues (a lot of information was needed outside of what could be available on the FLWS).

Recommendations

- Keep Aboriginal information in “Community.”
- Ensure “Who can help” is updated and complete for this audience (e.g., UBC First Nations clinics). It may be appropriate to have a section within “Get help” for Aboriginal people.
- Ensure publications that are relevant to Aboriginal people prominently display the link to Aboriginal information on the FLWS, as this could facilitate locating the website for them (one

woman used a publication she had picked up in the waiting room to try and find the site). This is also a practice that is likely relevant for many people who use print publications.

- Incorporate findings from parallel research and findings into the content for Aboriginal people on the FLWS (e.g., appropriate use of video, types of information needed, etc.).

Related wireframes

- 2.0 - 2.6 (Legal issue pages which are the recommended templates for the areas in the “Communities” section)

3.9.1 Related project: Aboriginal online strategy

The findings from the Aboriginal Online Strategy report should also be incorporated into the FLWS (e.g., recommendations for alternatives to text-based information, information in Aboriginal languages, use of social media, etc.).

Related inputs from that project to the FLWS are:

- Promising practices to engage this audience
- Preferred approaches to online learning for the Aboriginal community
- Overall expectations, preferences, and high priority needs of the Aboriginal audiences
- Best user-experience practices relevant to Aboriginal audiences

3.10 Multilingual content

Three people who were immigrants to Canada and spoke English as a second language participated in the listening labs. They all immediately went to the Multilingual section of the FLWS and were disappointed that information in their language (Spanish) was limited. One person regularly uses Google Translate to read English information on the Internet.

However, the court system itself is not available in multiple languages and the effort and expense in providing all information in multiple languages is high.

Recommendations

- Provide core information in other languages.
- Include “Resources in” multiple languages in the header to communicate that only chosen resources are available in multiple languages.
- Consider a pilot with Google Translate with a clear disclaimer for some information, possibly in parallel with English text.

Related wireframe

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation

3.11 Video and other formats

People did not seek out information by video or other format (e.g., audio, factsheets, publications, etc.). They generally searched for information by topic (e.g., custody, varying an order, finding out if you have custody you can move, etc.).

However, when prompted, there was some interest in video. Two LSS clients noted they would like to see what court was going to be like. One intermediary suggested a video for a chambers binder and another noted she often refers clients and staff to some of the videos.

Recommendations

- Demote organization of information by format in global navigation and other pages.
- Profile video, publications, and fact sheets in context (e.g., a video about going to court on a page about going to court).
- Create video when something needs to be shown visually (e.g., Going to court).

Related wireframes

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation
- 2.0 - Legal issues landing page

3.12 Printing

Because many people with family law issues have web literacy issues and/or limited access to the internet, some intermediaries reported printing information to give or mail to clients.

Recommendations

- Provide “print page” functionality for ease of printing.

Related wireframes

- All wireframes except the homepage show this.

3.13 Sharing

Because of the nature of family law information, it is not expected that people wish to publicly share information found on the FLWS via sites like Twitter and Facebook. However, people do sometimes assist other people in searching for information. Therefore, the option to email a page can facilitate sharing.

Recommendation

- Provide an “email page” option to facilitate sharing information.

Related wireframes

- All wireframes except the homepage show this.

3.14 Mac computers

Research activities all took place on PCs. However, a number of survey comments related to issues using the website with a Macintosh computer.

Recommendations

- Test and ensure core functionality for Macintosh computers.

3.15 Search

The search results on the FLWS show relevant results. However, everyone that was observed using the search thought they had left the FLWS because search results show without a FLWS header. In two cases, people said they would take this as a sign the website didn’t work properly and leave it (especially if they had not yet understood the website was official).

Recommendation

- Include the FLWS header in the search results, so people understand they are still on the FLWS and seeing results from the FLWS.

3.16 Mouse-over on definitions

It is useful to have the ability to see a definition of a term in context (the current ability to mouse-over terms and see the definition). However, closing the mouse-overs was difficult for everyone who opened them (it is necessary to put the mouse back over the text in green to close it).

Recommendation

- Include a clear “Close” or “X” button on definitions for people to easily close them.

3.17 Context within site

There are currently no bread crumbs on the site. There is also no highlighting or indication of being in a particular section. For example, viewing the Separation fact sheet does not show as being part of the Divorce section. This can make it difficult for people to orient themselves, find related information, and understand the context of the information they are looking at, especially if they have arrived at a page through searching.

Recommendation

- Show information as appearing within a section (e.g., Separation agreement within the Divorce section).

Related wireframes

- 2.1 - Legal issue factsheet
- 2.6 - Self-help guide

3.18 Mobile

The percentage of mobile visitors to the FLWS has been increasing at one percent per month over the past year and now makes up over 12 percent of all traffic. The design of a mobile version of the website is in progress.

Recommendation

- Include a link to the mobile website in the header of the FLWS.
- Continue to invest in the quality and usability of the mobile website to support its growth.

Related wireframe

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation

3.19 Donating

LSS is planning to include the option to donate to the FLWS as part of its fundraising strategy.

Recommendations

- Include link to donate in the footer of the website.
- Include a more prominent invitation to donate near the end of the self-help guides when people have benefitted from using the website and may like to donate.

Related wireframe

- 1.0 - Homepage and global navigation (see the footer)

3.20 LiveHelp

This was not tested in the research activities. However, it has been included in the wireframes.

Recommendations

- Include a call-out for LiveHelp at the bottom of the right column on content pages to support people seeing it in the context of reading and looking for information.

- It is recommended not to show a call-out on the homepage in order to encourage people to look for information before contacting someone.
- LiveHelp should also appear prominently in the contact information.

Related wireframes

- All wireframes except the homepage show this

3.21 Look and feel

The focus of the research activities was on information and findability. However, in some of the listening labs, other family law websites were visited (JP Boyd’s Family Law Resource, Clicklaw, Family Law of New Brunswick, Attorney General, and the Government of Canada). The following was observed:

- In all cases, people avoided JP Boyd’s website due to the impression given by its design (many colours, busy, not “official” looking).
- Clicklaw was seen by two people as “less official” and “more contemporary” than what they were looking for in a legal information site.
- People felt reassured being on the Attorney General or Government of Canada sites that they were getting official information.
- In general, people liked the homepage of the New Brunswick family law site. They thought it looked friendly, and they could see at a glance that the website is for the public.

Recommendations

- Use a design that supports the message the website is official, while being friendly.
- Avoid designs that strongly communicate an impression of being too “modern” or “trendy.”

3.22 Search logs

Search logs were not available during this research project, but are planned to be available in the future. Search logs are an excellent way to determine what topics people are looking for on a site.

Recommendation

- Monitor search logs and ensure content that is frequently looked for exists and is easy to find.

4 Success Metrics

Some ways to measure the success of improvements to the website include the following:

- An increase in intermediaries reporting that members of the general public are using the website on their own (there was general consensus the members of the public need help)

- Intermediaries (who can compare use of the website before and after changes) report better usability.
- An increase in visits to the site. This could be due to identification of the FLWS in search results, better identification of the website as useful when they first visit, and more people able to use the site.
- An increase in positive comments and ratings in surveys.

5 Summary of recommendations

The following is a list of recommendations (with dependencies), purpose, priority, and task size.

Major recommendations

No.	Recommendation	Purpose	Priority	Task size	Dependencies
1.	Search results heading: Create a masthead for the search page so people know they're still on the site. (page 17)	Reduce people leaving the site; encourage use of search.	High	Small	None
2.	Create Legal system area: Create new Your legal system tab. Create Legal system pages (basics, DIY, FAQ, Who can help, Links, and Legislation), and move all relevant content to new area. Delete repeated links from other categories. (page 11)	Make content more accessible and reduce lengthy content lists and repeated links.	High	Medium	Changes to global navigation; Removal of content from Legal issues area
3.	Forms (revision to landing page and creation of pages for forms): Build database to manage links to forms and create a description of each form. (page 13)	Help users find and use the right forms.	High	Medium	None
4.	Legal issues: Basics: Reclassify content according to topic rather than format, write synopses of each topic as introductions, and reorganize content accordingly. (page 12)	Improve usability/ accessibility of introductory information	High	Large	Creation of Legal Systems landing page

No.	Recommendation	Purpose	Priority	Task size	Dependencies
5.	Legal issues: Do it yourself: Organize links to guides according to topic, write synopses of each topic as introductions, and reorganize links accordingly. (page 13)	Help users identify the correct self-help guide for their needs.	High	Medium	Creation of Legal Systems landing page
6.	Demotion of organization by type: Organize by subject as much as possible. Will occur organically as we carry out the above tasks. May require some manual reorganization. (page 16)	Improve overall usability and findability of content.	Medium	Small (ongoing)	Affects many pages and navigation
7.	Who can help: Build database, create short description of each resource, categorize according to legal issue, community, and legal system, and organize. (page 14)	Identify in-person resources more clearly for users.	Medium	Medium	None
8.	Legal issues: FAQ: Create subcategories for each FAQ area, assign FAQs to subcategories, build database, rewrite and shorten all FAQs, and add to database. (page 12)	Improve usability of FAQ and help people find brief answers to short questions	Medium	Large	None
9.	Formatting of self-help guides: Move step numbers to left side, restructure all guide pages. (page 13)	Improve usability of self-help guides for all audiences.	Medium	Very large	None
10.	Email and print functionality: Create an email link to allow users to share links to pages. Not proceeding with print links, as users can be guided to the default print functionality available in browsers. (page 16)	Allow users to share content with others.	Low	Email link: Small	None
11.	Meta tags for search engine optimization: Create new meta tags, and implement page by page or section by section (still to be determined). (page 9)	Increase visits to the site by target users.	Low	Medium	None

No.	Recommendation	Purpose	Priority	Task size	Dependencies
12.	Global navigation and homepage content: Redo home page to make site content more accessible. (page 10)	Improve overall usability in multiple areas.	Low	Medium	Reorganization of multiple areas; visual design
13.	Expand the publications database to allow for links to related material. (page 14)	Allow users to find related material more easily.	Low	Medium	None
14.	Add multilingual icons to indicate that some material is available in other languages. (page 15)	Convey to users that resources are available in languages other than English	Low	Medium	None
15.	Highlighting and showing content area: Show information as appearing within a particular section (e.g., separation agreements within divorce section). (page 18)	Improve overall usability through context.	Low	Large	Technical design needed
16.	Mouseover stickiness on definitions. Occasionally definitions stay open when you mouse over them until you click on them again. (page 17)	General usability; fix minor glitch.	Low	Large	None
17.	Profile video, publications, and fact sheets in context by embedding into other pages instead of just linking. (page 16)	Make information available in context.	Low	Large	None
18.	Create video when something needs to be shown visually (e.g., going to court). (page 16)	Provide content in the most appropriate medium.	Low	Large (ongoing)	None

Minor, still to be considered, or already achieved recommendations

	Recommendation	Action
1.	Use the right columns of pages to call out secondary or supporting information to key content.	Already doing (to expand)
2.	Highlight and link to forms in context wherever relevant.	Already doing (to expand)
3.	Test and ensure core functionality for Macintosh computers	Already doing
4.	Keep the Legal issues and Community areas in the global navigation.	Already doing
5.	Keep Aboriginal information in Community.	Already doing
6.	Use large headings that describe the content of sections of pages and include white space between heading and text.	Already doing
7.	Continue providing high-quality comprehensive information.	Already doing
8.	Use a design that supports the message that the site is official while being friendly and avoid designs that strongly communicate an impression of being too modern or trendy.	Already doing (continue providing a comfortable, accessible environment.)
9.	Monitor search logs and ensure that content that is looked at frequently exists and is easy to find.	Already doing (Online outreach coordinator to look into it as ongoing usability work.)
10.	Provide core material in other languages. Consider a pilot with Google Translate with a clear disclaimer for some information, possibly in parallel with English text.	Online outreach coordinator to look into it. (Need a disclaimer to move forward.)
11.	LiveHelp recommendations: include a call out for LiveHelp at the bottom of right-hand columns on content pages so people see it in context; don't show call out or link on home page so people are encouraged to look at site before contacting LiveHelp; and show LiveHelp prominently in the contact information.	Work-in progress (for the LiveHelp project)

12.	Include link to mobile site in header of site, and continue to invest in the quality and usability of the mobile site to support its growth. (Mobile site is just a quick reference and stage 2 is to make all content scalable.)	Will not link to the mobile site because it doesn't contain family law information. Will consider further.
13.	Use a default font that is as large as possible.	For consideration
14.	Since much of the target audience is visiting the AG site while researching their family law issue, request higher profile linking from the AG site.	Action needed
15.	Include a link to donate in the footer of the website and include a more prominent invitation to donate near the end of the self-help guides when people have benefitted from using the site and may like to donate.	Action needed (also to consider implications & policy matters)

LSS Aboriginal Online Strategy Report and Recommendations



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Executive Summary

The online world is an engaging medium that falls outside of your typical corporate system. In order for the Legal Services Society (LSS) to be successful in engaging with their users, they must incorporate new ways to reach them, while still maintaining integrity and mitigating any risks. By following clear guidelines and policies related to any online presence, LSS will be able to reach out further to its intended audiences, including Aboriginal people.

It's clear that while every intention has been made by LSS to ensure Aboriginal audiences have been addressed, a more defined strategy for online access needs to be implemented. Also, clear methods need to be developed to address Aboriginal Twitter and Facebook content so that these online resources are handled in a similar way as the Aboriginal section of the LSS website.

In order to engage effectively with Aboriginal persons, LSS has to have easily accessible Aboriginal content (Twitter, Facebook, blog, website, YouTube), which doesn't require a lot of searching or "clicks" to get to the information. Furthermore, the information needs to be presented in a way that does not involve heavy text and works to include visuals and voice that are culturally relevant.

This Aboriginal online strategy report has 18 recommendations that are summarized below:

	In Context	Report Recommendation
1.	Aboriginal Services Program Manager	Aboriginal online strategies are developed and implemented in collaboration with the Aboriginal Services Program Manager (pages 4 – 5)
2.	Aboriginal Services Program Manager	The Aboriginal Services Program Manager works with other LSS staff to market the online resources that are available to Aboriginal people. These include the LSS website and publications, Twitter, Facebook, blog, YouTube, and any future initiatives. (pages 4 – 5)
3.	Aboriginal web access landscape in BC	Keep up to date on the succession plan for Industry Canada's Community Access Program (CAP) network and see what ways are available for people to access LSS Aboriginal online resources. (page 7)
4.	Partnership with local agency	Establish a video conference "pilot" project consisting of one or two information sessions with remote Aboriginal communities, in partnership with a local agency. (page 8)
5.	LSS website	Create a better flow of information, establish fewer "clicks" to find information, and use more visual keys than the current heavy text blocks. (page 9).

	In Context	Report Recommendation
6.	LSS website	Incorporate tools, or means, of congregating all relevant postings on the Aboriginal landing page of the LSS website. This could include a Twitter feed, Facebook feed, blog roll, etc. (page 10)
7.	Partnership with external agency	Look at opportunities for external agencies, such as Aboriginal intermediaries and community partners, to provide a friendly gateway to the LSS website. (page 10)
8.	Aboriginal PLEI materials	Continue to use the medicine wheel concept; however, Aboriginal publications should be broken down into the same four distinct areas as the Aboriginal legal issues page to ensure continuity. (page 10)
9.	Social media	Incorporate more consistent posts on the LSS Facebook page specific to Aboriginal issues. (pages 11 – 12)
10.	Social media	Inventory which LSS intermediaries or community partners have a social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). (pages 12)
11.	Social media	Look at developing a guide/best practices to help the intermediaries and community partners in setting up social media tools for their organizations. (page 12)
12.	Social media	Link the @legalaidbc Twitter account with the LSS Facebook page. (pages 13 – 14)
13.	Social media	Any tweet that is relevant to Aboriginal people should include the hashtag #aboriginal. (page 14)
14.	Social media	Create a Twitter account for Aboriginal Services that focuses solely on Aboriginal issues. (page 14)
15.	Multimedia	Look at creating some “pilot” video clips, or audio-visual products, featuring overviews of key Aboriginal documents/services. Depending on LSS’s current level of expertise, this may need to be a partnership with an external organization experienced in creating these types of materials. (page 15).
16.	Multimedia	Develop YouTube playlists that categorize LSS videos. In the event that LSS develops Aboriginal-related videos, they can be organized through a playlist. (pages 15 – 16)

	In Context	Report Recommendation
17.	Miscellaneous	Any email feedback or conversations involving Aboriginal content to have a generic email signature. (page 16)
18.	Staff training	Provide appropriate training opportunities for LSS staff, in person or online, to increase their ability to develop and use social media applications. (page 17)

Introduction

Since the Internet was created, it was traditionally used as a means of dispensing information to users. With the growing technologies and amount of users online, it's now used in multi-faceted ways to both dispense and receive information from users, wherever they may reside.

The Legal Services Society (LSS), BC is aware of these trends and is looking at how they can adopt and use online tools to increase awareness of their services to all audiences, including Aboriginal communities. This was a priority identified in the 2012/2013 – 2014/2015 LSS Service Plan¹, where it states "Use innovative, collaborative, and flexible models (including technology) to deliver legal aid services, with an emphasis on Aboriginal and other underserved communities."

As well, Aboriginal people/communities are joining this trend more and more and it's essential that organizations, such as LSS, ensure they are spending time focusing efforts on engaging through these mediums.

This report will make recommendations about ways LSS can implement an Aboriginal online strategy using web/social media tools to ensure that current initiatives take into consideration the needs of the Aboriginal community.

This strategy includes recommendations that can be implemented in various stages.

Background

Aboriginal Services Program

In 2007, LSS contracted Ardith Walkem to look at addressing the legal needs of Aboriginal peoples in BC. Her report, *Building Bridges: Improving Legal Services for Aboriginal Peoples*², identified four key areas in which changes could be made to improve these needs. These are:

1. Aboriginal representation within LSS,
2. Legal representation available to Aboriginal people,
3. Communication and outreach to Aboriginal communities, and
4. Involvement of Aboriginal people in LSS program planning.

In 2008, LSS hired the first Aboriginal Services Program Manager (ABSPM) as a result of these recommendations, with the objective of implementing key recommendations from the report.

The ABSPM is the key contact with the majority of the parties communicating with LSS from an Aboriginal perspective. It is essential that the ABSPM have a leadership and coordinating role in the delivery of Aboriginal online services.

While strategies can be developed using new mediums of communication, such as social media, there is no substitute for the one-on-one interaction that Aboriginal communities continue to benefit from.

¹ www.legalaid.bc.ca/assets/aboutUs/reports/servicePlans/servicePlan2012.pdf

² www.legalaid.bc.ca/assets/aboutUs/reports/legalAid/buildingBridges_en.pdf

Recommendation #1: Aboriginal online strategies are developed and implemented in collaboration with the Aboriginal Services Program Manager.

Recommendation #2: The Aboriginal Services Program Manager works with other LSS staff to market the online resources that are available to Aboriginal people. These include the LSS website and publications, Facebook, Twitter, blog, YouTube, and any future initiatives.

Social media

While there are various forms of online venues, the newest and fastest growing section is social media

Social media: forms of electronic communication (as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)³

Social media is a rapidly growing trend that is encompassing all aspects of the Internet and, in turn, the world. Social media tools like Twitter and Facebook, among others, are having a big effect on the way people interact and the frequency of those interactions.

Barriers

Remote vs. urban

Large portions of the Aboriginal population in BC reside in urban centres. This segment of the population has access to better education and work opportunities, as well as better services and amenities. However, Aboriginals living in urban centres typically don't differ in their online uses. If anything, the urban population is not as dependent on the use of the Internet to access information and services as a remote community, which has no other option.

The following chart shows a breakdown of on-reserve/off-reserve populations by age group.

³ www.merriam-webster.com/

WHAT'S THE AGE MIX?		Aboriginal Peoples					
		On Reserve		Off Reserve		Total Aboriginal	
		#	% Dist.	#	% Dist.	#	% Dist.
Population							
Total		51,055	100.0	145,015	100.0	196,075	100.0
Under age 15		13,840	27.1	41,410	28.6	55,250	28.2
Age 15-17		3,320	6.5	9,680	6.7	13,000	6.6
Age 18-24		5,635	11.0	16,180	11.2	21,815	11.1
Age 18-19		1,855	3.6	5,085	3.5	6,940	3.5
Age 20-24		3,775	7.4	11,095	7.7	14,870	7.6
Age 25-34		6,350	12.4	19,265	13.3	25,605	13.1
Age 35-64		18,500	36.2	51,965	35.8	70,465	35.9
Age 65+		3,415	6.7	6,520	4.5	9,935	5.1
Males - total		26,265	100.0	68,590	100.0	94,860	100.0
Under age 15		7,200	27.4	21,045	30.7	28,245	29.8
Age 15-17		1,760	6.7	5,045	7.4	6,805	7.2
Age 18-24		2,925	11.1	7,850	11.4	10,775	11.4
Age 25-34		3,285	12.5	8,890	13.0	12,175	12.8
Age 35-64		9,455	36.0	22,945	33.5	32,395	34.2
Age 65+		1,645	6.3	2,820	4.1	4,460	4.7
Females - total		24,795	100.0	76,420	100.0	101,215	100.0
Under age 15		6,640	26.8	20,365	26.6	27,005	26.7
Age 15-17		1,560	6.3	4,635	6.1	6,195	6.1
18-24 years		2,710	10.9	8,335	10.9	11,040	10.9
25-34 years		3,060	12.3	10,370	13.6	13,435	13.3
35-64 years		9,050	36.5	29,020	38.0	38,070	37.6
65+ years		1,775	7.2	3,700	4.8	5,475	5.4

Figure 1: Age Structure of Profile of Aboriginal Peoples — Census 2006

This next chart breaks down the Aboriginal population into each of the regional districts. This is useful to look at given the various areas of the province where LSS has intermediaries or community partners.

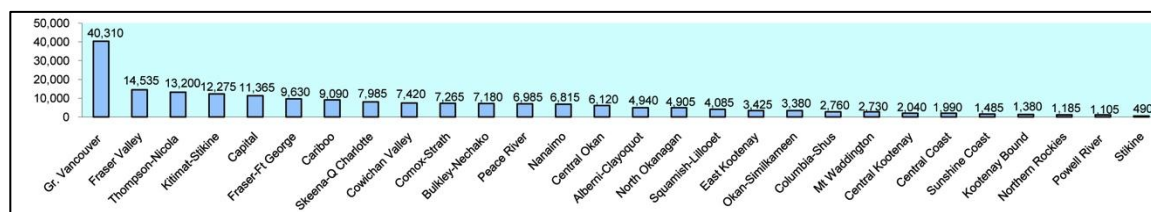


Figure 2: Number of Aboriginal Persons by Regional District — Census 2006

Internet connectivity status/plan

It is crucial that access to the Internet is available for Aboriginal communities. Over the last few years, a number of programs have helped bridge this gap, including the Connecting Communities Agreement and Connecting Citizens Grant Program.

At the present time, approximately 88 percent of the 203⁴ First Nations communities in BC have access to high-speed Internet. This includes terrestrial solutions, such as fibre, high-speed wireless, and microwave, as well as a number of communities whose only current option is satellite.

⁴ There are 203 registered bands in BC under AANDC. For the purposes of connectivity, it is the main "reserve" of each registered band, given they may have multiple reserves. Typically the main "reserve" has an administration building, health centre, school, and the majority of dwellings.

Through both the Pathways to Technology Project⁵, and the TELUS Deferral Account⁶, all 203 First Nation communities will have high-speed access by the end of 2014.

The spreadsheet in Appendix 1 outlines the current and forecasted connectivity status of Aboriginal communities in BC.

Mobile connectivity

More and more, mobile devices are becoming a main source of sending and receiving information; this includes mobile phones and tablet-type devices. Aboriginal people also use these devices; however, in most of the communities that our outside major centres or off major highway routes, there is limited access to cellular networks.

As high-speed Internet projects get completed, wireless networks are being developed and community members can use their Internet-enabled devices over the network.

LSS is currently working on a mobile website (as opposed to an app) that will be a tree format, accessible by all mobile devices capable of browsing the Internet.

Appendix 2 shows the major cellular networks in the province.

Access to computers

While the gap between connected and unconnected communities is still prevalent, there is also the issue of access to computers. There are a number of programs/facilities on or near First Nations communities that can help with this barrier.

Community Access Program (CAP)

Industry Canada's Community Access Program (CAP) gives thousands of Canadians affordable access to the Internet in places like schools, community centres, and libraries. It provides access to those people who might not have computers or Internet access in their homes or workplaces.⁷

As of March 31, 2012, the CAP program is no longer funded. It remains to be seen what, if any, the legacy of this program will be, and what will happen to the equipment. Potentially, the equipment will remain in the communities. Even though the CAP "network" is no longer funded, there still may be ways for LSS to utilize it if the equipment is re-deployed in a manageable manner.

In BC, there were approximately 340 CAP sites. These reside in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. Appendix 3 includes a full list of all CAP sites in BC, excluding the Vancouver area.

Recommendation #3: Keep up to date on the succession plan for Industry Canada's Community Access Program (CAP) network, and see what ways are available for people to access LSS Aboriginal online resources.

⁵ www.pathwaystotechnology.ca

⁶ www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/com100/2010/r100831.htm

⁷ www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/cap-pac.nsf/eng/home

Video conferencing

Currently, video conferencing (VC) is relatively new to most Aboriginal communities. While there is various VC gear available in a number of communities through health or educational-related programs, the biggest issue is lack of content or opportunities for users to engage using this technology.

LSS has an opportunity to start providing some high-level information about their services through VC sessions. This would have to be delivered utilizing the intermediaries or community partners in each area.

At this time, LSS does not have a dedicated VC unit at the Vancouver Regional Centre. Using webcams and software, they would be able to participate in VC sessions. As well, working in partnership with the Chiefs Health Council and Health Canada (First Nations Inuit Health Branch, BC Division), LSS could potentially use their current network to deliver these sessions.

Recommendation #4: Establish a video conference “pilot” project consisting of one or two information sessions with remote Aboriginal communities, in partnership with a local agency.

Attached in Appendix 4 is a list of the VC locations that have been distributed through health-related programs in BC.

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is also rolling out VC-type units to 52 sites⁸ over the next three years; currently, there are nine sites that are complete but are not accessible to the general public.

Current initiatives

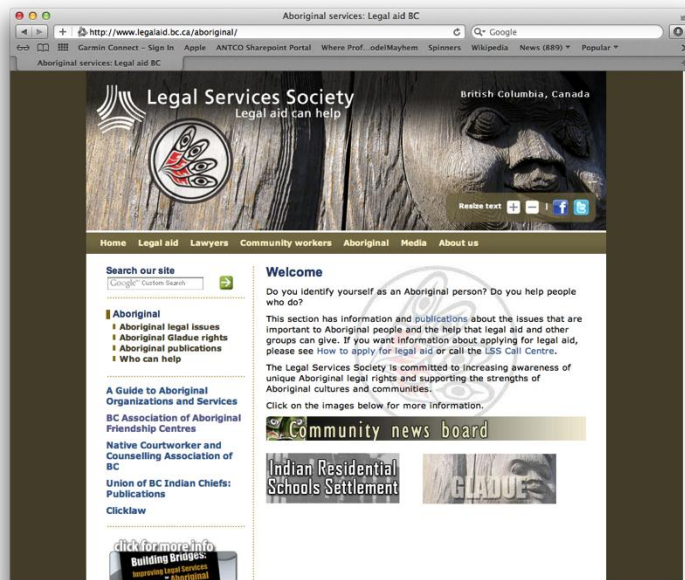
At this time, there are a few online venues that LSS is working within. These include the following:

LSS website	www.legalaid.bc.ca
Facebook	www.facebook.com/LegalAidBC
Twitter	www.twitter.com/legalaidbc
YouTube	www.youtube.com/user/FamilyLawVideos
Blog	www.elan.lss.bc.ca
Newsletter	www.legalaid.bc.ca/lawyers/legalAidBrief.php

It should be noted that these initiatives take into consideration all aspects of LSS and are not Aboriginal specific. You will find this explained further in the following section.

⁸ FNESC Connected Classrooms Project; Alan Khara: FNESC Senior Data Manager

Website (www.legalaid.bc.ca/aboriginal)



While the usability of the LSS website on a whole is being looked at by Habañero Consulting Group, this report will look at the Aboriginal section of the LSS website and key areas to increase awareness and usability.

LSS launched the Aboriginal section of the LSS website in June 2011. This section includes information on various areas relating to Aboriginal issues, including Gladue rights and residential schools settlement, and a full list and PDF versions of all Aboriginal publications.

Currently, this section of the website is not focused at Aboriginal clients using the website without the help of intermediaries or partners.⁹ This section is text heavy and it takes a number of “clicks” to find information. This could prove daunting to a member in a remote community that has little or no Internet experience. This creates a potential barrier, as it is not inviting to them to explore the materials to find answers to questions they may have.

Recommendation #5: Create a better flow of information, establish fewer “clicks” to find information, and use more visual keys than the current heavy text blocks.

⁹ “Google Analytics location reporting — which has some limitations — shows us that the vast majority of traffic to the LSS website comes from the Lower Mainland. For example, Vancouver accounts for almost 29 percent of all traffic just by itself.”

Currently, Aboriginal issues-related content is distributed through multiple online streams, such as the ELAN blog posts, tweets, and Facebook updates. In order to minimize the amount of searching users need to do, the Aboriginal web section should be the “meeting place” for all LSS Aboriginal online content.

Recommendation #6: Incorporate tools, or means, of congregating all relevant postings on the Aboriginal landing page of the LSS website. This could include a Twitter feed, Facebook feed, blog roll, etc.

Community members are typically familiar with the organization or individuals in their area who provide legal assistance. There is a comfort level associated with them, and they would be a more practical place for them to look for legal information, either in person or on their website, if they have one.

Recommendation #7: Look at opportunities for external agencies, such as Aboriginal intermediaries and community partners, to provide a friendly gateway to the LSS website.

Providing some widgets or tools these organizations could incorporate into their website that could help feed local traffic through to the Aboriginal-related content on the LSS website.

Medicine wheel

The Aboriginal section can be broken down into two distinct columns. In the left-hand column or sidebar there are 10 different options that you can choose from. In the main column or area, you have three different options.

When entering the Aboriginal legal issues page from the left sidebar, you are presented with a “medicine wheel”.

The medicine wheel provides four distinct areas on Aboriginal-specific legal issues that you can choose from. This concept is visually easy to follow, and it’s straightforward to choose where to go next. When you enter the Aboriginal publications page from the sidebar, the same wheel now features all the Aboriginal-related publications. However, it is not broken down into the same distinct areas as the Aboriginal legal issues page.

Recommendation #8: Continue to use the medicine wheel concept; however, Aboriginal publications should be broken down into the same four distinct areas as the Aboriginal legal issues page to ensure continuity.



Facebook (www.facebook.com/LegalAidBC)



Facebook is a social networking service and website launched in February 2004, operated and privately owned by Facebook Inc. As of February 2012, Facebook has more than 845 million active users. Users must register before using the site, after which they may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organized by workplace, school or college, or other characteristics, and categorize their friends into lists such as "People From Work" or "Close Friends".¹⁰

The LSS launched their Facebook page on January 23, 2012. Since that time, they have had 76 likes.

¹⁰ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook>

The page was created to help increase traffic to LSS websites and general awareness of LSS's legal aid services, and to help support interaction and dialogues about LSS legal aid services online.¹¹

The LSS Facebook page covers all aspects of LSS's services. It does not focus particularly on Aboriginal issues, although there are some posts that are related. Given the current amount of Aboriginal-related posts, it's not likely that the existing page will attract many Aboriginal people.

Recommendation #9: Incorporate more consistent posts on the LSS Facebook page specific to Aboriginal issues.

As mentioned earlier, most of the community members are familiar and more comfortable with their local agencies. A number of these agencies may or may not have a Facebook presence. LSS's ability to post on agency pages would prove more effective in reaching the user at the community level.¹²

Recommendation #10: Inventory which LSS intermediaries or community partners have a social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, etc.).

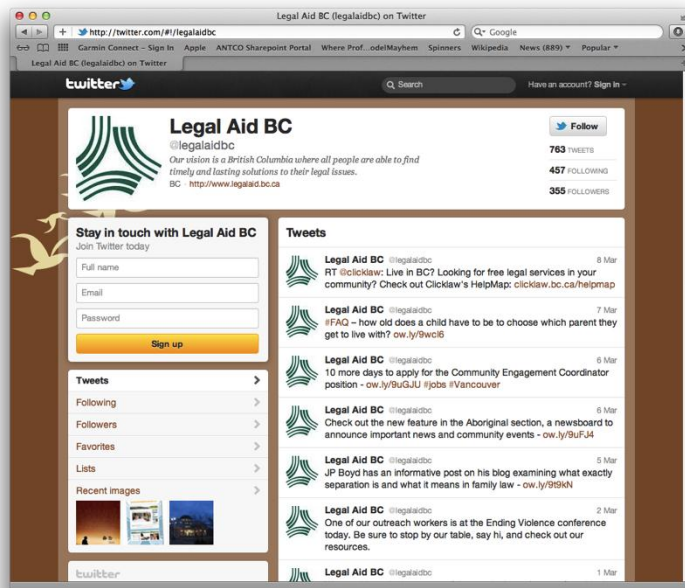
Sometimes resources in the communities are limited and time is also an issue. It may prove cost effective for LSS to help alleviate some of this by creating a guidebook with best practices and steps on how organizations can engage on Facebook or other social media.

Recommendation #11: Look at developing a guide/best practices to help the intermediaries and community partners in setting up social media tools for their organizations.

¹¹ LSS Facebook guidelines. (To get a copy, email SocialMedia@lss.bc.ca)

¹² For example Keewaytinok Native Legal Services Facebook page has 635 likes www.facebook.com/pages/Keewaytinok-Native-Legal-Services/193595124668

Twitter (www.twitter.com/legalaidbc)



Twitter is an online social networking service and microblogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based posts of up to 140 characters, known as "tweets"... It has been described as "the SMS of the Internet."¹³

The LSS Twitter account was officially live in May of 2009. It currently has 364 followers, is following 455 users, and has tweeted 764 times¹⁴, an average of less than one tweet a day. The current target audience for the @legalaidbc Twitter account is diverse¹⁵. It does not specifically target Aboriginal people.

The current LSS Twitter plan includes various safeguards to reduce the risks that may arise from this type of exposure. There is a process that needs to be followed in order to post a tweet, which is done by the Online Outreach Coordinator (OOC). This is not usual practice for tweeting, which is more random and spontaneous in nature, and typically what draws more followers. In order to effectively engage on Twitter, it is good practice to be much more active, including more tweets and re-tweets of other relevant posts.

One thing that could help with this practice is to ensure other social media accounts like Facebook are linked, so that when an update is posted on the LSS Facebook page, it is immediately sent out on Twitter. This will aid in providing more traffic to the LSS Facebook page as well since the majority of the time the tweet will have a shortened link directing people to the full message on Facebook.

¹³ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter>

¹⁴ <https://twitter.com/#!/legalaidbc>

¹⁵ "Advocates, LIOWS and other staff, legal aid lawyers, other community groups involved in poverty law, potentially some clients" LSS on Twitter guidelines. (To get a copy, email SocialMedia@lss.bc.ca)

Recommendation #12: Link the @legalaidbc Twitter account with the LSS Facebook page.

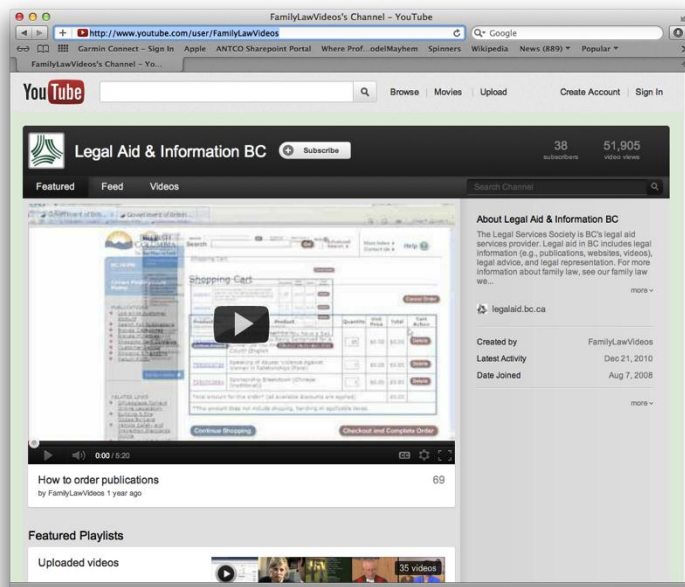
Hashtags (a # symbol in front of a keyword, i.e., #aboriginal) are a critical part of Twitter. These help to categorize tweets within Twitter to show up more easily when searched. As well, if you use a hashtag it now becomes a clickable link to all other tweets in that category, allowing a more fluid flow of information. Typically, Twitter users follow specific hashtags in order to find relevant information on that subject.

Recommendation #13: Any tweet that is relevant to Aboriginal people should include the hashtag #aboriginal.

As the availability of staff training and a social media policy is developed, it would be ideal to have multiple Twitter accounts on behalf of LSS. This would include an account focused on Aboriginal issues that is wholly operated and managed by the ABSM, who could then tweet at her own discretion. Tweets could be posted simultaneously to more than one account (e.g., Aboriginal and LSS)

Recommendation #14: Create a Twitter account for Aboriginal Services that focuses solely on Aboriginal issues.

[YouTube \(www.youtube.com/user/FamilyLawVideos\)](http://www.youtube.com/user/FamilyLawVideos)



*YouTube is a video-sharing website, created by three former PayPal employees in February 2005, on which users can upload, view and share videos.*¹⁶

LSS first joined YouTube in August of 2008 to promote a series of Spanish videos. Unlike the Facebook and Twitter accounts, there are no formal guidelines or goals around Legal Aid's YouTube page.

Some stats around the current YouTube Channel are:

Subscribers:	38
Videos:	35
Video views:	52,111

Aboriginal persons are typically visual in nature, and videos or audio-visual slideshows reflecting their traditions and culture are more likely to resonate with them. For this reason, YouTube is an excellent choice as a communications medium for Aboriginal audiences because of its ability to communicate legal issues and highlight key points through the use of visuals.

In this way, complex documents become relevant through the use of Aboriginal voice, animation, video, text, and clipart.

In July 2009, LSS developed a report titled "Evaluation Of LSS Videos As Means To Communicate Legal Information¹⁷". This report did conclude that "...many people find text an obstacle to understanding legal information and because the audio-visual materials produced the highest test scores, A-V slideshows are a cost-effective alternative to video." It also concluded that, at that time, LSS perhaps didn't "currently have enough expertise to develop its own videos or that the particular subject matter was less suitable to video..." This report also went on to say that LSS should consider "producing AV materials on family law topics; some in languages other than English, as well as for Aboriginal audiences."

Recommendation #15: Look at creating some "pilot" video clips or audio-visual products featuring overviews of key Aboriginal documents/services. Depending on LSS's current level of expertise, this may need to be a partnership with an external organization experienced in creating these types of materials.

Playlists in YouTube are an excellent way to organize videos. Once you have created a playlist, users can then "embed" or "share" these through their website, email, or other social media tools. For example, if an Aboriginal playlist was available, intermediary or community partner sites could embed the link on their website — this would profile the LSS videos using the "face" of the local agency.

¹⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/YouTube>

¹⁷ www.legalaid.bc.ca/assets/aboutUs/reports/videoEvaluationReport.pdf

Recommendation #16: Develop YouTube playlists that categorize LSS videos. In the event that LSS develops Aboriginal-related videos, they can be organized through a playlist.

Recommended initiatives

At this point, it is not recommended to look at other online tools. While sites like Google Plus are growing day-by-day, most Aboriginal communities currently communicate generally through Facebook. Once a good handle on the current means of online communication is acquired, it will be more effective to enable other options.

Best practices

Social media policy/guidelines

Some general best practices have been created on how LSS employees should use Facebook and Twitter. At the time of this report, the current communications policy is being updated to include social media.

A strong policy will help outline to employees LSS's guidelines and/or values of how to effectively and appropriately communicate online on behalf of the organization and help reduce any risk.

Email signature

An email signature will present a standard professional appearance for contact information. The signature should be designed to include the full name and title of the employee, all relevant contact information, as well as links to the Aboriginal section of the LSS website and any other social media links, such as Twitter, YouTube, and Facebook. This should also include a legal disclaimer.

Due to LSS's current practice, an email signature may need to be developed for two different scenarios as outlined below:

1. When the ABSPM sends an email from whatever email client they are using, a standard email signature is attached. This should be looked at for any devices they may use to send emails.
2. In the case of a general feedback routed through a single email client, most email clients (Outlook, etc.) can have multiple signatures. When feedback is of an Aboriginal nature, the appropriate signature could be chosen and attached.

Recommendation #17: Any email feedback or conversations involving Aboriginal content to have a generic email signature.

Training

There are endless resources on the Internet in regards to social-media-related training. In order to maximize the investment and energy that is required to properly use social media tools, staff training is a must.

Lynda.com (www.lynda.com) has some excellent online courses that staff can take at their own pace.

Recommendation #18: Provide appropriate training opportunities for LSS staff, in person or online, to increase their ability to develop and use social media applications.

Potential partners/resources

First Nations Education Steering Committee

The First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) is an independent society that is committed to improving education for all First Nations learners in British Columbia. FNESC is led by representatives of First Nations across the province.

FNESC also provides administrative services for the First Nations Schools Association, IAHLA and other partner organizations.¹⁸

FNESC currently has a network of schools/educators that could prove a good partner to LSS and its activities. As well, FNESC is rolling out video conferencing equipment to a number of its locations over the next three years.

First Nations Technology Council (FNTC)

The First Nations Technology Council (FNTC) was created by a First Nations Summit Resolution to develop a First Nations Technology Plan to ensure that all 203 BC First Nations:

- are connected with high speed broadband;
- have access to affordable, qualified technical support; and,
- have the skills needed to access technologies that can improve their lives.

Subsequent resolutions passed by the First Nations Summit, the Union of BC Indian Chiefs, and the BC Assembly of First Nations Chiefs have given FNTC the further mandate to:

- Develop an integrated information management strategy;
- Establish a common services organization to support the development of technologies and applications in First Nations communities; and,
- Develop the Fully Integrated Technologies (FIT) community model.¹⁹

¹⁸ www.fnesc.ca/

¹⁹ www.fntc.info/

The FNTC currently runs the portal which could be a means of advertising LSS services or new programs. It also may be a venue to help distribute materials out to communities through the portal face linking back to the LSS website.

First Nations Inuit Health, Health Canada: e-Health Solutions Unit

FNIH has a number of video conferencing units all across BC. This may prove to be a good partnership if content developed and distributed by LSS was used to reach the communities.

Appendix 1: BC Connectivity Spreadsheet

Appendix 1: BC Connectivity Spreadsheet

First Nation Name	Community Name	Existing		Planned		
		Backhaul Connectivity Type	Backhaul Connectivity Bandwidth (Mbps)	Last Mile Network Technology	Connectivity Program or Initiative	Year to be connected
Hupacasath First Nation	Ahahswinis 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Mowachah/Muchlaht	Ahlaninaquas No. 12	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	Deferral Account	2011
Atcheltz	Atcheltch No. 9	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Namgis First Nation	Alert Bay 1A	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	Cable Modem		
Alexandria (Esliagh)	Alexandria No. 3	Low Speed		dialup	Pathways to Technology	2011
Eskeletic	Alkali Lake 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Huu-ay-aht First Nation (Ohiyahat)	Anacla 12	Low Speed		dialup		
Tl'etinqox-t'in Gov Office	Anahim's Flat 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Ashcroft	Ashcroft No. 4	Low Speed		dialup		
Lake Babine Nation	Babine 6 (Wit'at or Fort Babine)	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Pathways to Technology	2011
Lake Babine Nation	Babine 25 (T'achet Lake)	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2012
Beecher Bay (Sclahew)	Beecher Bay 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	Deferral Account	2012
Helitsuk	Bella Bella 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Nuxalk Nation	Bella Coola 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Blueberry River First Nation	Blueberry River 205	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Bonaparte	Bonaparte 3	Low Speed		dialup	Deferral Account	2013
Bridge River	Bridge River 1	Low Speed		dialup	Deferral Account	2013
Burns Lake	Burns Lake 18	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Burrard (T'seli-Waututh Nation)	Burrard Inlet 3	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Campbell River (We Wai' Kum)	Campbell River 11	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Canim Lake	Canim Lake 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Pathways to Technology	2011
Cape Mudge (Wei Wai' Kai)	Cape Mudge No. 10	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Caycosh Creek Indian Band	Caycosh Creek No.1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Chawathil	Chawathil 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		dialup	Deferral Account	2012
Cheam (Rosedale)	Cheam 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Chehalis	Chehalis 5	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Chemainus (Kulleet Bay)	Chemainus 13	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Bhatesaht	Chenahkint No. 12	Low Speed		dialup	Deferral Account	2012
Cheslatta Carrier Nation	Cheslatta 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		dialup	Deferral Account	2011
Xeni Gwefin Government	Chilco Lake No. 1A	Low Speed		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2013
Lower Similkameen	Chopaka 7 & 8	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Upper Similkameen	Chuchwayha 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Coldwater	Coldwater 1	Low Speed		dialup	Pathways to Technology	2011
Pauquachin	Cole Bay 3	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Kunaxa	Columbia Lake 3 (P'akisq'huik)	Consumer - Terrestrial		none		
Comox	Comox 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Mamailikulla-Qwe'Qwa'Sot'Em	Compton Island No. 6	Low Speed		dialup	Deferral Account	2012
Kwikwetlem (Kwayhquiltum)	Cogitiam No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Cowichan (K'howitzun)	Cowichan 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Lake Cowichan	Cowichan Lake	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Kunaxa	Creston 1 (Lower Kootenay)	Consumer - Terrestrial		multimode/single mode fibre		
Dahmad'aw First Nation (Tanaktauik)	Dead Point No. 5	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2012
Soda Creek (Kas't'ulj, Nenayni)	Deep Creek 2	Low Speed		fixed wireless		
Caroe Creek	Dog Creek 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Dolg River	Dolg River 206	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Pathways to Technology	2011
Kikialla (Gixxaala Nation)	Dolphin Island 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 6 mb	Cable Modem		
Upper Nicola	Douglas Lake 3	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2013
Douglas Tipella (Ka'xsta)	Douglas No. 8	Low Speed		none		
Saulteau	East Moberly Lake 169	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	none		
Tsawout First Nation	East Saanich 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Uchucklesaht (Kildonan)	Ehlatsee No. 2	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless		
Spats'eh (Spallumcheen)	Enderby 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Esquimalt	Esquimalt	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		

Appendix 1: BC Connectivity Spreadsheet

First Nation Name	Community Name	Existing		Planned	
		Backhaul Connectivity Type	Backhaul Connectivity Bandwidth (Mbps)	Last Mile Network Technology	Backhaul Connectivity Type
Tsay Keh Dene	Finlay River	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Taku River Tlingit	Five Mile Point 3	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Uchelti Teneh (Shelley)	Fort George No. 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Fort Nelson First Nation	Fort Nelson 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Kwadacha	Fort Ware 1	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Xax'lip	Fountain 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Ni-ga'a Nation	Gingok (Kincolth)	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Gitanmaax	Gitanmaax 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Gitanwow (Kiwancool)	Gitanwow 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	fixed wireless	
Gtsagukla	Gtsagukla 1	Low Speed		fixed wireless	2012
Gtswangak (Kiwangak)	Gtswangak 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	fixed wireless	2012
Ni-ga'a Nation	Gtswinkshkw	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Dease River	Good Hope Lake	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Pechedehat First Nation	Gordon River 2	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 5 mb	Cable Modem	
Kwicksutai-neuk-ah-kwaw-sh-mish (Gliford Is.)	Gwayasdums No. 1	Low Speed		dialup	
Hagwilget Village	Hagwilget 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Halalt	Halalt 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Halfway River First Nation	Halfway River 168	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Twiltsis Tribe	Hanatsa No. 6	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
High Bar	High Bar No. 1	Low Speed		dialup	
Homalco	Homalco No. 9	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	2011
Tladaskwala (Nuwtiti)	Hope Island No. 1	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	2012
Gwawaenuk Tribe	Hopetown No. 10A	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Ka-Yuk-K'it'it/Cher-Kittes7'et'it	Houpsistas 6 (Kyuquod)	Low Speed		dialup	
Skuppah	Indiyukinatko No. 2	Low Speed		dialup	2012
Iskut	Iskut 6	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Uliuilet	Ittatsoo 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	
Boothroyd	Kahmoose 4	Low Speed		dialup	2013
Kamloops	Kamloops 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Kanaka Bar	Kanaka Bar No. 1A	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	2012
Owekeeno/Mulkinux Nation (Rivers Inlet)	Kait 1	Consumer - Satellite	< 1mb	fixed wireless	
Katzie	Katzie 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Kwakiutl	Kippase 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	
Kispiox	Kispiox 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	fixed wireless	
HaIsia (Ktamaat Village Council)	Kitamaat 2	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	fixed wireless	
Ktasoo (Klamut)	Kitasoo 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 6 mb	fixed wireless	
Ktsunkalum	Ktsunkaylum 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	2013
Kluskus (Uhoosku Dene Govt)	Kluskus 1	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	
Ktunaxa	Kootenay 1 (St. Mary's)	Industrial/Institutional		multimode/single mode fibre	
Boston Bar First Nation	Kopichichin 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Hartley Bay	Kulkayu 4	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 6 mb	fixed wireless	
Ktselas	Kulpai 6	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	Cable Modem	2011
Cook's Ferry (Spences Bridge)	Kumcheen No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Penelakut	Kuper Island 7	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	2011
Kwaw-kwaw-Apilt	Kwawkwawapilt No. 6	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Leq'amel First Nation	Lakahahmen 11	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	
Lax-kwalaams (Port Simpson)	Lax kw'alaams	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	Cable Modem	
Ni-ga'a Nation	Laagats'ap No. 9 (Greenville)	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	
Daylu Dena Council (Lower Post)	Lard River 3	Low Speed		dialup	
Tit'it'et (T'it'it)	Lillooet 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Toquaht	Macoah No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Ditidaht (Nitinah)	Malachan 11	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	2011
Malahat First Nation	Malahat 11	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL	
Ahousaht	Marktos 15	Consumer - Terrestrial	< 10 mb	none	

Appendix 1: BC Connectivity Spreadsheet

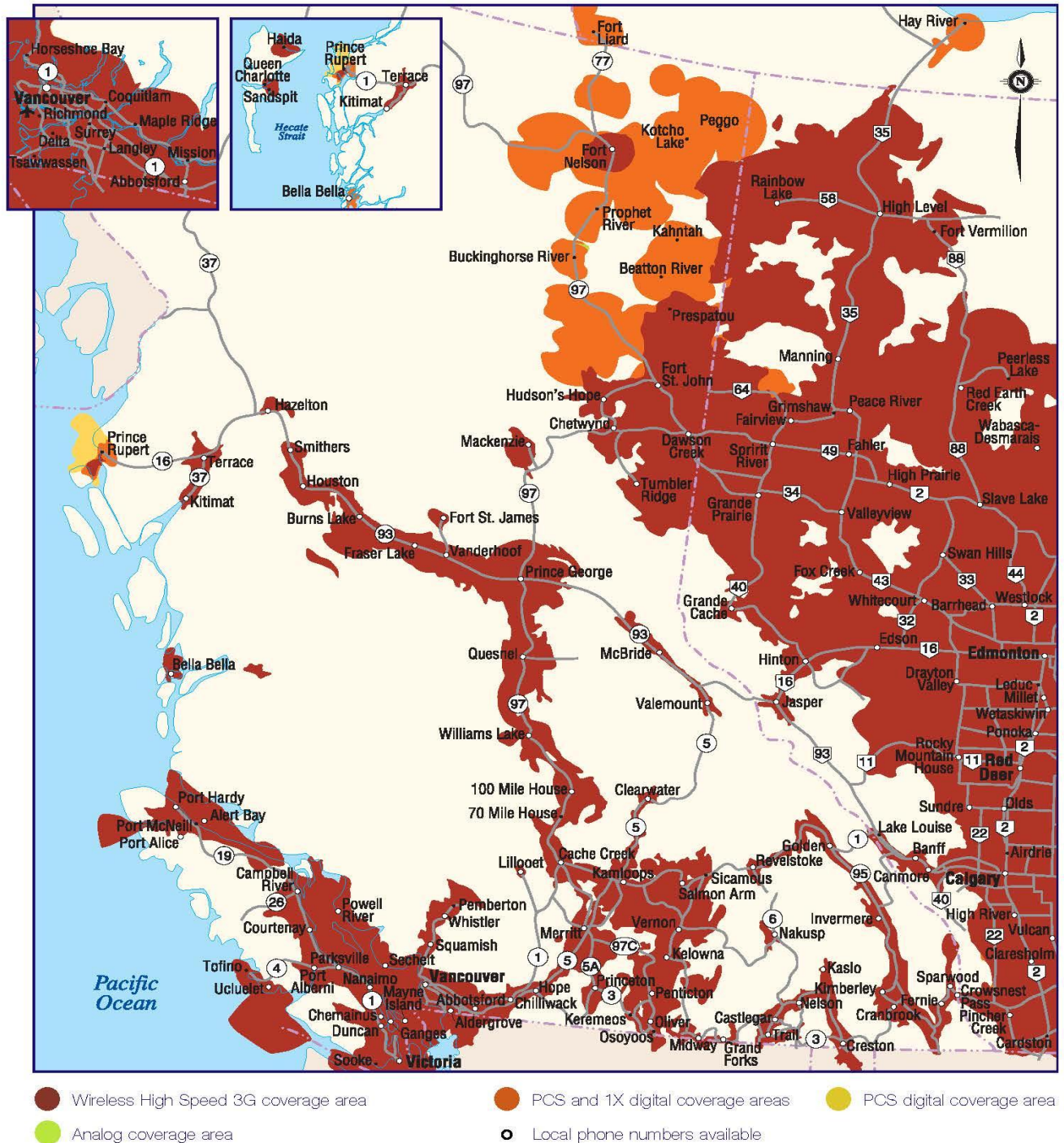
First Nation Name	Community Name	Existing		Planned		
		Backhaul Connectivity Type	Backhaul Connectivity Bandwidth (Mbps)	Last Mile Network Technology	Backhaul Connectivity Type	Connectivity Program or Initiative
Old Masset Village Council	Masset 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Matsqui	Matsqui Main 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
McLeod Lake (Tsekani, Tsek'hen)	McLeod Lake 1	Low Speed		DSL		
Kwantlen First Nation (Fort Langley)	McMillan Island 6	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Squamish	Mission 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Morietown	Morietown 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Ulwat (Mount Currie)	Mount Currie 6	Low Speed		HSPA cellular data	Pathways to Technology	
Musqueam	Musqueam 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Nak'azdli (Necosi)	Nak'azdli 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Suneymukw First Nation	Nanaimo Town 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Nanoose (Nanoose, Snow, New As)	Nanoose	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Nadleh Whut'en (Fort Fraser)	Nadley 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	none	Pathways to Technology	
Nazko	Nazco 20	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Lake Babine Nation	Nedat's 11	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless		
N'Quatqua (Anderson Lake, D'Arcy)	Nedatque 1 & 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Neskonlth	Neskonlth No. 1	Low Speed		DSL	Deferral Account	2011
Msag'a Nation	New Aiyash No. 1 (Gitlakdamix)	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Songhees First Nation	New Songhees 1A	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Lower Nicola	Nicola Mameet 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Nicomen	Nicomen	Low Speed		DSL	Deferral Account	2012
Nooaitch	Nooaitch 10	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL	Deferral Account	2013
Takla Lake First Nation (site 0518)	North Tada Lake 7	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless		
Simpow First Nation (North Thompson)	North Thompson 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Lytton	Nuuatun 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Nuchatlait	Oculje No. 7	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2012
Shaw'owhamel First Nation	Ohamil 1	Low Speed		DSL		
Okanagan	Okanagan 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL		
Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations	Opitsat 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Oregon Jack Creek (site 07193), Paska Island)	Oregon Jack Creek No. 3	Low Speed		DSL	Deferral Account	2013
Osoyoos	Osoyoos 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL		
Lake Babine Nation	Palling No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2011
Ts'kw'aylaww First Nation	Pavilion No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		none		
Pentiction	Pentiction 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Peters	Peters 1	Low Speed		DSL		
Lake Babine Nation	Pinhut Lake 23	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2011
Popkum	Popkum No. 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Dene Tsa Tse K'Nai (Prophet River)	Prophet River 4	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless		
Union Bar	Pudkatholchich No. 11	Low Speed		DSL	Deferral Account	2012
Little Shuswap Lake	Quaout 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Tsawetaneuk (King come Inlet)	Quae 7	Low Speed		DSL	Deferral Account	2012
Qualicum	Qualicum	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL		
Quatsino (Coal Harbour)	Quatsino Subdivision 18	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		
Red Bluff (Hrako Dene)	Quenel 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Tsi Daidel (Alexis Creek, Chilanko Forks)	Redstone Flat 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless		
Hesquiaht	Refuge Cove 6	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Deferral Account	2013
Skawahlook	Ruby Creek No. 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Samahquam	Sachteen No. 2	Low Speed		DSL		
Adams Lake	Sahlnakum 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem	Deferral Account	2011
Seabird Island	Seabird Island	Industrial/Institutional		fixed wireless		
Sechelt	Sechelt	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem		
Semiamoo	Semiamoo	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL		
Shackam	Shackam No. 11	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL	Deferral Account	2011
Lyackson (on Valdes Island)	Shingle Point No. 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		DSL		
Ktunaxa	Shuswap	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless		

Appendix 1: BC Connectivity Spreadsheet

First Nation Name	Community Name	Existing			Planned		
		Backhaul Connectivity Type	Backhaul Connectivity Bandwidth (Mbps)	Last Mile Network Technology	Backhaul Connectivity Type	Connectivity Program or Initiative	Year to be connected
Glen Vowell	Siike-dahk 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Siska	Siska Flat No. 3	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2012
Skeetchestn (Deadman's Creek)	Skeetchestn	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Skidegate	Skidegate 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Skin Tyee	Skins Lake No.16A	Consumer - Terrestrial		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Skatin Nations	Skokumchuck 4	Consumer - Satellite		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2012
Skowkale	Skowkale 10	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Skwah	Skwah 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Slaway (Shwint-y Village)	Slaway 5	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Slammon	Slammon 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Seton Lake	Slosh 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless			
Soowahlie	Soowahlie 14	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Tsarlip	South Saanich 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Spuzzum	Spuzzum 1	Low Speed		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2013
Scowitz	Squawkum Creek 3	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Squiala First Nation	Squiala 7	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Ulkatcho (Anahim Lake)	Squinas 2	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless			
Stellat'en	Stellaquo 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	
Stone (Yunes'ti Indian Band)	Stone 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Salk'uz	Stony Creek 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	
T'Sou-ke First Nation (site 06842)	T'Sou-ke 1	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Tl'az'ten Nation	Tache 1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	none			
Tahltan (site 0655)	Telegraph Creek 6	Industrial/Institutional		ADSL	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	2011
Ktunaxa	Tobacco Plains 2	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	none			
Toosey	Toosey No.1	Consumer - Terrestrial	<10 mb	fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Klahoose First Nation	Tork 7	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Tseshahit	Tsahaleh	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Tsawwassen	Tsawwassen	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Metlakatla	Tsimpsan No. 2	Low Speed		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2013
Westbank First Nation	Tsistikeptum 9	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Gwa'Sala-Nakwaxda'xw	Tsulquate 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Tzeachten	Tzeachten 13	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Nee-Tah-Buhn	Uncha Lake No. 13A	Consumer - Satellite		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Deferral Account	2011
Tseycum	Union Bay 4	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
Sumas	Upper Sumas 6	Consumer - Terrestrial		Cable Modem			
West Moberly First Nation	West Moberly Lake 168A	Consumer - Terrestrial		fixed wireless			
Whispering Pines/Clinton	Whispering Pines 4	Low Speed		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	2011
Williams Lake	Williams Lake 1	Low Speed		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	2011
Lake Babine Nation	Woyenne 27	Consumer - Terrestrial		ADSL			
Yakwekwioose	Yakwekwioose No. 12	Low Speed		dialup			
Yale First Nation	Yale Town No. 1	Low Speed		fixed wireless			
Yekooche	Ye Koo Che 3	Low Speed		dialup	Consumer - Terrestrial	Pathways to Technology	2011

Appendix 2: Major Cellular Network Maps in BC

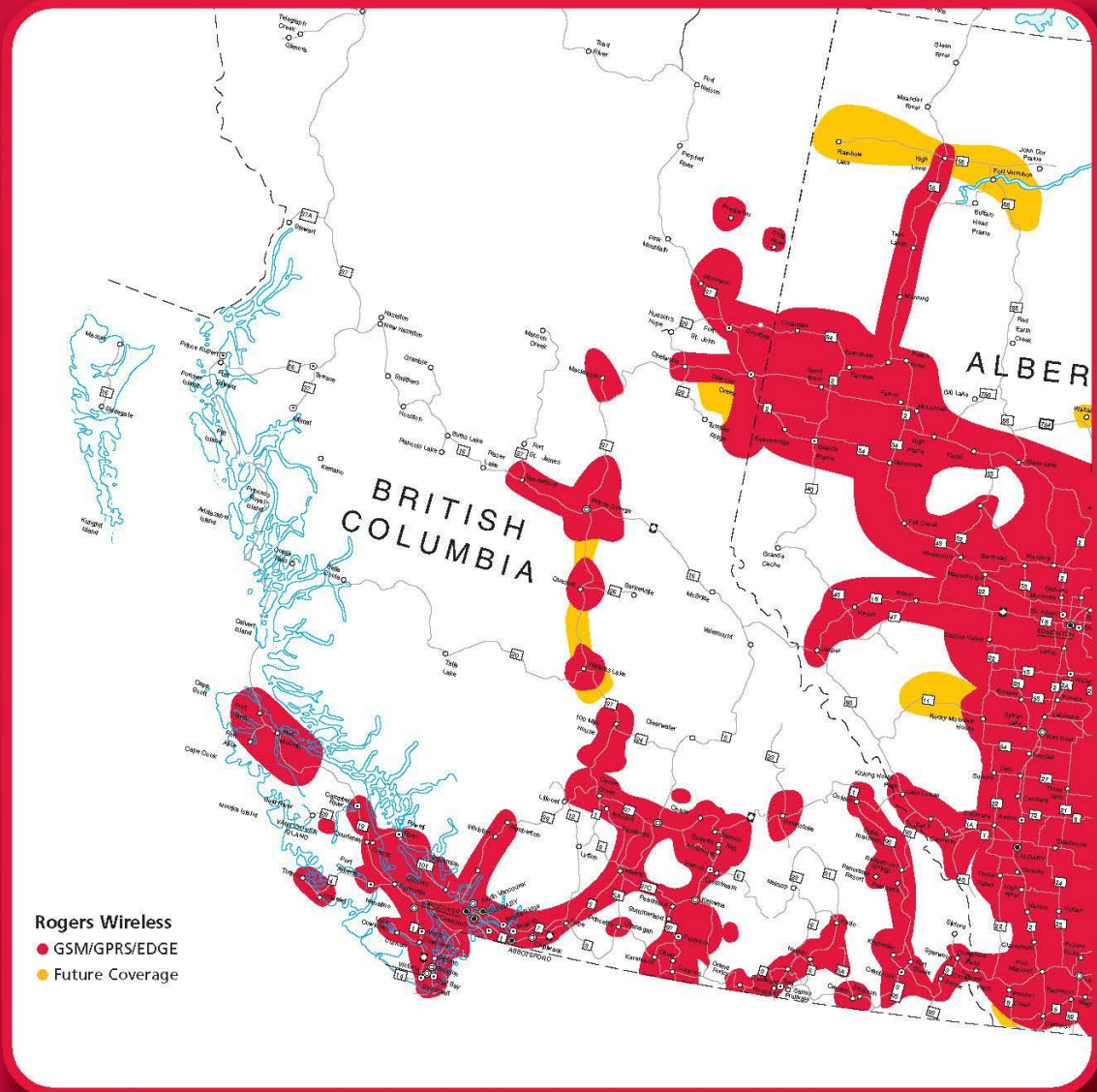
British Columbia



* Effective November 2008. Coverage areas are approximate. Actual coverage and network service may vary and are subject to change. Digital Wireless High Speed coverage depends on handset software and service type. Analog phones will work in all TELUS or roaming partner analog coverage areas. Tri-mode handsets are required for use in TELUS Wireless High Speed digital PCS coverage areas and in our analog coverage areas. Map does not indicate Pay & Talk service coverage. Visit us at telusmobility.com/coverage for our most recent coverage maps for all services, including Pay & Talk. D3831 © 2008 TELUS. NAQ308BCPCM1E



British Columbia Coverage Map



Coverage Maps for other provinces available at rogers.com/coverage

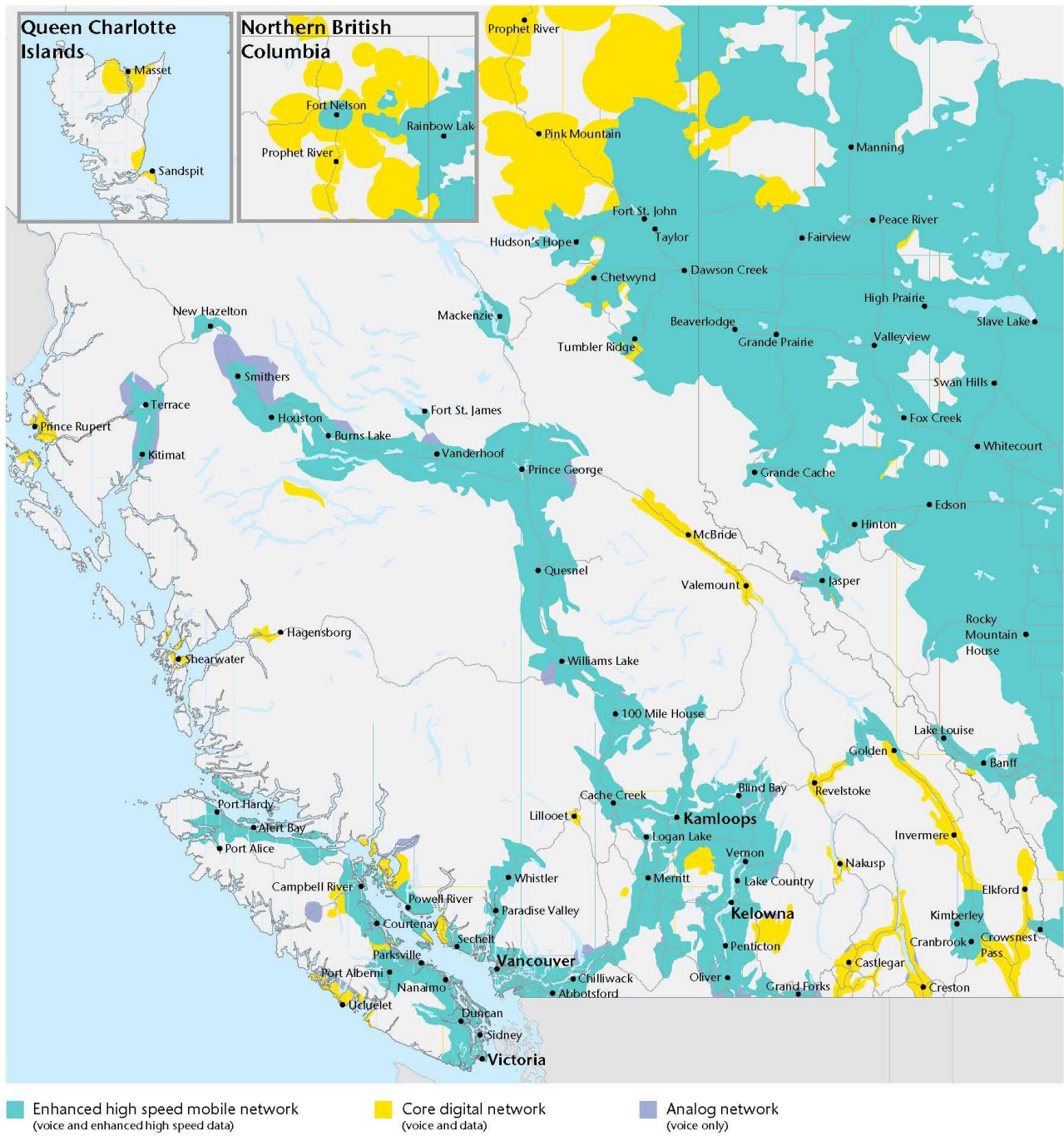


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175BC-51-09



Coverage map - British Columbia



Current as of December 2007. Actual coverage may vary. Enhanced high speed and high speed mobile network are available with activated compatible devices. Check our website for future network expansions at www.bell.ca/coverage.

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Chetwynd Public Library	Chetwynd
Dawson Creek Municipal Public Library	Dawson Creek
Fort Nelson Public Library	Fort Nelson
Fort St. John Public Library	Fort St. John
Fort St. John Visitor Info Centre	Fort St John
Hudson's Hope Public Library	Hudson's Hope
Kiwanis Enterprise Centre	Dawson Creek
Mckenzie Public Library	Mackenzie
Pouce Coupe Public Library	Pouce Coupe
Tumbler Ridge Public Library	Tumbler Ridge
Blueberry River First Nations	Buick Creek
Valemount Public Library	Valemount
Dome Creek Library	Dome Creek
Eugene Joseph School	Fort St James
Fraser Lake Public Library	Fraser Lake
Stellat'en First Nation	Fraser Lake
McBride and District Public Library	McBride
Vanderhoof Public Library	Vanderhoof
Bear Lake Community Commission	Bear Lake
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Bridge Lake Library Branch	Bridge Lake
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Forest Grove Library Branch	Forest Grove
Cayoose Creek Band	Lillooet
T'it'q'et First Nation	Lillooet
Canim Lake Band Community Centre	Forest Grove
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - 100 Mile House Library	100 Mile House
70 Mile Access Centre	70 Mile House
Wells & District Chamber of Commerce	Wells
Alexis Creek Community School (Lee's Corner Store)	Hanceville
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Alexis Creek Library Branch	Alexis Creek
Tletinqox School (Chilcotin Tletinqox School - Anahim Band)	Alexis Creek
Esketemc First Nation	Alkali Lake
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Big Lake Library Branch	Big Lake
Tsi Deldel CAP Site	Chilanko Forks
Canoe Creek Band CAP Room	Alkali Lake
Dog Creek Reserve - Canoe Creek Band CAP Room	Dog Creek
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Horsefly Library Branch	Horsefly
Likely Community School (Village Garden Restaurant)	Likely
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - McLeese Lake Library Branch	McLeese Lake
Ulkatcho Indian Band	Anahim Lake
Toosey Band CAP Site	Riske Creek
Tatlayoko Lake	Tatlayoko Lake

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Tatla Lake School	Tatla Lake
Tsil'os Park Service Station	Nemiah Valley
Wuikinuxv Nation	Rivers Inlet/Dawsons Landing
Old Massett Village Council	Old Massett
Bella Bella Community School	Bella Bella
Computer Access Centre	Williams Lake
Cariboo Friendship Society and Choices for Youth	Williams Lake
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Williams Lake Area Branch	Williams Lake
ESP Consulting Resource Room	Williams Lake
Williams Lake Indian Band	Williams Lake
Soda Creek Indian Band	Williams Lake
ESP Consulting Ltd Quesnel	Quesnel
Quesnel Tillicum Society	Quesnel
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Quesnel Library Branch	Quesnel
Nazko Valley Community Centre	Nazko
Prince George Public Library - Hart Hwy (Nechako) Branch	Prince George
L'Heidli T'enneh First Nation	Prince George
Cercle des canadiens-français	Prince George
Northern Family Health Society	Prince George
Carney Hill Neighbourhood Centre	Prince George
Prince George Council of Seniors	Prince George
Prince George Native Friendship Centre	Prince George
Prince George Brain Injury Group Society	Prince George
Elder Citizens Recreation Association	Prince George
Future Cents	Prince George
Prince George Public Library - Bob Harkins Branch	Prince George
Spruce Capital Senior Citizens' Recreational Centre	Prince George
Ashcroft Indian Band	Ashcroft
Cariboo Regional District Library (CRD) - Anahim Lake Library Branch	Anahim Lake
Skeetchestn Indian Band	Savona
Takla Lake First Nation - Nus Wadeezulh Community School	Takla Lake (Fort St James)
Awgsalsa School	Bella Coola
Simpco First Nation	Barriere
Nadleh Whut'en Band	Fort Fraser
Spences Bridge Community Club	Spences Bridge
Pender Harbour Community School	Diana Rae
Alpha Adventures & Education	Jamie Mannie
CFDC Sunshine Coast Office	Susan Deschamps
Sechelt Public Library	Helen Prosser
Alpha Adventures and Education - Wilson Creek	Jamie Mannie
Gibsons and Area Community Centre	Gibsons

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Okanagan Regional Library - Golden Branch	Golden
Okanagan Regional Library - North Shuswap Branch	Chase
Okanagan Regional Library - Enderby Branch	Enderby
Enderby and District Chamber of Commerce	Enderby
Spallumcheen Band (Splotsin First Nations)	Enderby
Falkland and District Community Learning Centre	Falkland
School District 22 (Vernon) - Crossroads Learning Centre	Lumby
Whitevalley Community Resource Centre Society	Lumby
Old Age Pensioner Hall	Lumby
Okanagan Regional Library - Sicamous Branch	Sicamous
Shuswap Outreach Society	Sicamous
Okanagan Regional Library - Sorrento Branch	Sorrento
Okanagan Regional Library - Naramata Branch	Naramata
Okanagan Regional Library - Okanagan Falls Branch	Okanagan Falls
Oliver Senior Centre Society	Oliver
Okanagan Regional Library - Oliver Branch	Oliver
Osoyoos Indian Band Development Corporation	Oliver
Osoyoos Senior Centre	Osoyoos
Destination Osoyoos - Economic Development	Osoyoos
Destination Osoyoos - Osoyoos Visitor Centre	Osoyoos
Town of Osoyoos - Sonora Community Centre	Osoyoos
Okanagan Regional Library - Osoyoos Branch	Osoyoos
Okanagan Regional Library - Peachland Branch	Peachland
Peachland Visitor Centre	Peachland
Okanagan Regional Library - Summerland Branch	Summerland
Okanagan Regional Library - Hedley Branch	Hedley
Okanagan Regional Library - Princeton Branch	Princeton
Okanagan Regional Library - Salmon Arm Branch	Salmon Arm
Okanagan Regional Library - Silver Creek Branch	Salmon Arm
Salmon Arm Partners in Community Leadership Association	Salmon Arm
Okanagan Indian Band	Vernon
Independent Living (formerly Vernon Disability Resource Centre)	Vernon
Connections Career Centre	Vernon
Okanagan Regional Library - Vernon Branch	Vernon
Literacy & Youth Initiatives Society of North Okanagan	Vernon
School District 22 (Vernon) - The Open Door Education Centre	Vernon
Vernon and District Immigrant Services Society	Vernon
Okanagan Regional Library - Mission Branch	Kelowna
Okanagan Regional Library - Rutland Branch	Kelowna
May Bennett Wellness Centre	Kelowna
YMCA-YWCA of the Central Okanagan	Kelowna

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Kelowna Community Food Bank Society	Kelowna
Okanagan Regional Library - Kelowna Branch	Kelowna
Canada's Alexandra Gardner Women and Children Safe Centre	Kelowna
Hollywood Road Education Services (Centre)	Kelowna
Okanagan Boys & Girls Clubs	Kelowna
Recreation & Cultural Services	Kelowna
Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society	Kelowna
Kelowna Community Resources Society	Kelowna
Okanagan Regional Library - Westbank Branch	Westbank
Westbank First Nation CAP (Adult Education Centre)	Westbank
Westbank and District Chamber of Commerce	Westbank
New Opportunities for Women (NOW) Canadian Society	Kelowna
Vernon Upper Room Mission	Vernon
Okanagan Dry Cleaners & Laundry	Osoyoos
Okanagan Regional Library - Sicamous Branch	Sicamous
Okanagan Regional Library - Princeton Branch	Princeton
Brackendale Public Access	Brackendale
Garibaldi Public Access Site	Garibaldi
Pemberton & District Public Library	Pemberton
Totem Hall Public Access	Squamish
The Hotspot CAP Site	Squamish
Summerland Middle School	Summerland
Summerland Assets Development Initiative (SADI) - Unity Youth Clu	Summerland
Summerland Community Learning Centre	Summerland
Penticton Secondary Learning Centre	Penticton
Penticton School Board	Penticton
Leir House Cultural Centre - Academy of Music	Penticton
Penticton Assets for Youth - Home Learner's Program	Penticton
Penticton Seniors' Drop-In Centre Society	Penticton
Penticton Public Library	Penticton
Penticton Indian Band	Penticton
Penticton Retirement Centre	Penticton
Visitor Information Centre - Chamber of Commerce	Penticton
Golden Women's Resource Centre	Golden
Radium Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce	Radium Hot Springs
Canyon / Lister Elementary School	Canyon
Crawford Bay Elementary / Secondary School	Crawford Bay
Creston Public Library	Creston
Elkford Public Library	Elkford
Erickson Elementary School	Erickson
Fernie Public Library	Fernie

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Sparwood Public Library	Sparwood
Yahk Elementary School	Yahk
Revelstoke Chamber of Commerce	Revelstoke
Okanagan Regional Library - Revelstoke Branch	Revelstoke
School District 8 (Kootenay Lake) - Brent Kennedy Elementary	Crescent Valley
The Edge	Edgewood
J&S Snacks, Surf and Suds	Fauquier
Beaver Valley Public Library	Fruitvale
Kaslo and District Public Library	Kaslo
Nelson Municipal Library	Nelson
Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy	Nakusp
School District 20 (Kootenay-Columbia) - Robson Community School	Robson
Rossland Chamber of Commerce	Rossland
Salmo Public Library	Salmo
School District 8 (Kootenay Lake) - W.E. Graham Community Service	Slocan
School District 8 (Kootenay Lake) - Mount Sentinel Secondary School	South Slocan
Christina Lake Chamber of Commerce	Christina Lake
Grand Forks and District Public Library	Grand Forks
Greenwood Museum CAP Site	Greenwood
Midway Public Library	Midway
College of the Rockies - Kimberley Campus	Kimberley
Kimberley Public Library	Kimberley
Cranbrook Public Library	Cranbrook
Community Futures Development Corporation - Cranbrook	Cranbrook
AFKONet	Nelson
Castlegar Station Museum (Heritage Society)	Castlegar
Castlegar & District Public Library	Castlegar
Trail and District Public Library	Trail
Columbia Valley Chamber of Commerce	Invermere
Academy of Learning	Cranbrook
Dease Lake	Dease Lake
Good Hope Lake Internet Society	Good Hope Lake
New Aiyansh Village Government	New Aiyansh
Burns Lake Public Library	Burns Lake
Granisle Public Library	Granisle
Greenville CAP Site - Laxgalt'sap	Greenville
Hazelton Public Library	Hazelton
Houston Public Library	Houston
Upper Skeena Development Centre - Kitwanga	Kitwanga
CFDC Nadina-Smithers	Smithers
Kyah Wiget Education Society	Moricetown

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Stewart Public Library	Stewart
Gingolx Information Highway Society	Kincolith
Kitkatla CAP Site	Kitkatla
Oona River Community Association (School House)	Oona River
Metlakatla CAP Site	Metlakatla
Port Edward CAP Site	Port Edward
Lax Kwa'laams	Port Simpson
Yekooche First Nation	Yekooche
Kitimat Public Library Association	Kitimat
Terrace Public Library	Terrace
Gitmaxmak'ay Port Edward Nisga'a	Prince Rupert
Friendship House of Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert
Prince Rupert Library CAP	Prince Rupert
Prince Rupert North Coast Career Services Society	Prince Rupert
Dodge Cove CAP Site (Digby Island)	Dodge Cove
Smithers Public Library	Alfred
Upper Skeena Development Centre - Hazelton	Hazelton
Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City) CAP Site	Gitwinksihlkw
Hartley Bay Band CAP Site	Hartley Bay
Alert Bay Public Library and Museum Alert Bay	Alert Bay
Gwa-Yee Community CAP Site	Kingcome Inlet
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Port Alice Branch
Port Hardy Chamber of Commerce	Port Hardy
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Port McNeill Branch
Port McNeill Community Futures	Port McNeill
Sointula Resource Centre Projec	Sointula
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Woss
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Gold River
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Quadra Island
Cortes Island WIFI Society	Cortes Island
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Sayward
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Tahsis
Zeballos Mason Lodge (Community Futures) - Cedars Inn	Zeballos
Ahousat Teen Centre Ahousat (dormant at this time)	Ahousat
Bamfield Community Access Site	Bamfield
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Cumberland
Denman Island Community School	Denman Island
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Hornby Island
Hornby Island Community Access Centre	Hornby Island
Lasqueti Internet Access Society	Lasqueti Island
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Tofino

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Union Bay
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Bella Coola
Bella Coola Valley Learning Society Career Centre	Bella Coola
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Port Clements
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Queen Charlotte
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Sandspit
Qualicum First Nations	Qualicum
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Qualicum
Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society (CALLS)	Courtenay
Valleylinks Community Network	Courtenay
Wachiay Friendship Centre Society	Courtenay
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Courtenay
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Parksville
The Write Place Literacy Centre	Parksville
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Campbell River
Centre Francophone, Site publique	Campbell River
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Port Alberni
Tseshaht Band Office	Port Alberni
Woss Public Library	Woss
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Comox
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Bowser
Port McNeil Chamber of Commerce	Port McNeill
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Ucluelet
The Linc Youth Centre	Courtenay
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Cortes
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Masset
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Sointula
Tides Canada Initiatives - Reel Youth	Cortes Island
Campbell River Multicultural and Immigrant Services Association	Campbell River
Ehattlesaht Youth Centre	Zeballos
West Coast Community Resources Society	Ucluelet
Wei Wai Kum	Campbell River
New Leaf Learning Centre	Bella Coola
Greater Victoria Public Library	Saanich
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Chemainus
Chemainus Chamber of Commerce	Chemainus
Chemainus Community Schools Association	Chemainus
Greater Victoria Public Library	Colwood
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Duncan
Cowichan Valley Living Resource Centere	Duncan
Greater Victoria Public Library	Esquimalt

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Galiano Island
Galiano Island Activity Center	Galiano Island
Honeymoon Bay Community Hall	Honeymoon Bay
Chemainus Native College	Ladysmith
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Ladysmith
Ladysmith Resource Center	Ladysmith
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Cowichan Lake
Cowichan Chamber of Commerce	Cowichan Lake
Greater Victoria Public Library: Goudy Branch	Langford
Westshore Learning and Training	Langford
Metchosin Community House	Metchosin
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Mill Bay
Vancouver Island Regional Library: Harbour Front	Nanaimo
Vancouver Island Regional Library: Wellington	Nanaimo
Greater Victoria Public Library	Oak Bay
Pdner Island Public Library	Pender Island
Vancouver Island Regional Library	Port Renfrew
Port Renfrew Health and Social Services Society	Port Renfrew
Big Blue and Cousins	Saanich
Greater Victoria Public Library: Bruce Hutchinson	Saanich
Greater Victoria Public Library: Emily Carr	Saanich
Greater Victoria Public Library: Nellie McClung	Saanich
Royal Oak Community Access	Saanich
Greater Victoria Public Library: Saanich Centennial	Saanich
Ukrainian Cultural Center	Saanich
Victoria Native Friendship Center	Saanich
Core Inn Youth	Salt Spring Island
Mary Hawkins Memorial Library	Salt Spring Island
Eddie Reed Memorial Library	Saturna
Saturan #1: Internet Café	Saturna
Saturna Recreation Center	Saturna
Thetis Island Community Centre	Thetis Island
Bayanihan Centre	Victoria
Blanshard Community Centre	Victoria
Bridges for Women Society	Victoria
Burnside Gorge Community Association	Victoria
Central Library - GVPL	Victoria
Disability Resource Centre	Victoria
Downtown Community Activity Centre	Victoria
Fairfield Community Place	Victoria
Fernwood Neighbourhood Resource Group	Victoria

Appendix 3: BC Community Access Program (CAP) Sites

Site Name	City
Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria	Victoria
James Bay Community Project	Victoria
James Bay Community School Society	Victoria
James Bay New Horizons Society	Victoria
La Societe Francophone de Victoria	Victoria
Literacy Victoria	Victoria
Oaklands Community Centre	Victoria
Salvation Army - Harbourlight	Victoria
Salvation Army Family Services	Victoria
Silver Threads - Downtown	Victoria
Shoreline Community School	View Royal
Songhees First Nation	View Royal
View Royal Community Library Association	View Royal
Youbou Access to Computers	Youbou

Appendix 4: BC Health Related VC Locations

Community	Location	Model of Unit
Adams Lake	PO Box 1009 Chase	VSX 7000
Ahousaht	458 Ahousaht Reserve	VSX 7000
Akisqnuik	PO Box 130, Hwy 95 Windermere	VSX 7000
All Nations Trust Co. (ANTCO)	208-345 Yellowhead Hwy. Kamloops	HDX 7000
Anaham	PO Box 168, Alexis Creek	QDX 6000
Anahim Lake Nursing Station	Hudson Road, Anahim Lake	VSX 7000
BCANDS	1179 Kosapsum Crescent, Victoria	HDX 8000
Blueberry River First Nation	PO Box 3009, Buick Creek	QDX 6000
Boston Bar Indian Band	45999 Hwy 1, Boston Bar	HDX 7000
Carrier Sekani - Burns Lake	Box 1475 Burns Lake	
Carrier Sekani Family Services	987 4th Ave. Prince George	HDX 8000
Carrier Sekani - Vanderhoof	Vanderhoof	
Chawathil	#4 - 60814 Lougheed Hwy, Hope	HDX 7000
Chehalis Indian Band	4690 Salish Way, Agassiz	HDX 8000
Community Health Associates of BC	#2 3003 29 St. Vernon	VSX 7000
Cowichan / Tsewultun Health Centre	5768 Allenby Rd. Duncan	HDX 7000
Ditidaht (FNESS Unit)	658 Malachan Indian Reserve, Nitinat Lake	
Dog Creek	Dog Creek Road IR#1, Dog Creek	VSX 7000
Doig River	PO Box 56, Rose Prairie	QDX 6000
Ehattesaht	Zeballos	VSX 7000
Esketemc	1022 Esket Drive, Alkali Lake	VSX 7000
Fort Nelson First Nation	RR1, Mile 295 Alaska Hwy, Fort Nelson	VSX 7000
Gitanyow Health	PO Box 130 Kitwanga	VSX 7000
Gitsegukla	RR1 Box 25, Seymour Ave, South Hazelton	VSX 7000
Gitwangak	Kitwanga	VSX 7000
Gitxsan Health Society	PO Box 223, Hazelton	VSX 7000
Gwa'Sala	Port Hardy	
Hartley Bay	Hartley Bay	VSX 7000
Heiltsuk Health Centre	212 Wabalisa St., Bella Bella	VSX 7000
Hey-way'-noqu'	401-1638 E Broadway Ave, Vancouver	QDX 6000
H'ulhe-tun Health Society	8019 Chemainus Rd. Chemainus	HDX 7000
Hul'qumi'num' Health Office	Duncan	QDX 6000
Inter Tribal Health Authority (ITHA) Lounge	534 Centre Street, Nanaimo	HDX 9000
Iskut Valley Health Services	Iskut	QDX 6000
Kackamaans Family Development Centre	7830 Beaver Creek Rd. Port Alberni	VSX 7000
KDC - Fort Rupert	97 Tsakis Way, Port Hardy	
KDC Health - Campbell River	1400 A Drake Road, Campbell River	
KDC Health - Cape Mudge	Quathiaski Cove, Quadra Island	
KDC Health - K'omok	Comox	
Kispiox	2515 Mary Blackwater Dr. Hazelton	VSX 7000
Kitimaat Village Council	Box 1101, Kitimaat Village	VSX 7000S
Kitkatla Nursing Station	Box 150, Kitkatla	VSX 7000
Kitselas	5500 Gitaus Road, Terrace	HDX 7000
Kitsumkalum	3531 West Kalum, Terrace	HDX 7000
Kluskus (FNESS Unit)		
Ktunaxa - Cranbrook	7468 Mission Rd, Cranbrook	VSX 7000
Ktunaxa Child and Family - Creston	1007 A Simon Rd. Creston	QDX 6000
Kwadacha (Fort Ware) Health Centre	Fort Ware	HDX 8000
Lake Babine	Burns Lake	HDX 7000
Lake Cowichan	Lake Cowichan	
Lax Kwalaams (Port Simpson)	1602 Legaic St. Port Simpson	VSX 7000
Lillooet Health Centre	296 Main St. Lillooet	VSX 7000
Little Shuswap Health Centre	1528 Little Shuswap Lake Rd W, Chase	QDX 6000
Lower Similkameen	517 7th Ave., Keremeos	VSX 7000
McLeod Lake Indian Band	McLeod Lake	HDX 7000

Appendix 4: BC Health Related VC Locations

Community	Location	Model of Unit
Morictown	Morictown	QDX 6000
Nak'azdli	284 Kwah Rd. Fort St James	VSX 7000
Namgis Administration	Alert Bay	VSX 7000
Namgis Health	48 School Road, Alert Bay	VSX 7000
Nemiah Valley	PO Box 51, Nemiah Valley	QDX 6000
Nisga'a - Gitwinksihlkw (Canyon City)	PO Box 48 Gitwinksihlkw	VSX 7000
Nisga'a - Kincolith (Gingolx) Health Centre	1201 Fireman St. Kincolith	VSX 7000
Nisga'a - Laxgaltzap Health (Greenville)	Box 210 412 North Rd, Greenville	VSX 7000
Nisga'a - New Aiyansh	4920 Tait Ave. New Aiyansh	VSX 7000
Nisgaa Valley Health Ctr Doctor's Office	4920 Tait Ave. New Aiyansh	VSX 3000
North Thompson - Simpcw	Barriere	VSX 7000
North Wind Healing Centre	Box 2480 Station A, Dawson Creek	VSX 7000
Nuu chah nulth	5001 Mission Road, Port Alberni	QDX 6000
Okanagan Indian Band Health Centre	76 Head of the Lake Rd. Vernon	QDX 6000
Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA)	3255 C Shannon Lake Rd., Westbank	VSX 7000
Old Massett	PO Box 176, Old Massett, Haida Gwaii	VSX 7000
Osoyoos Indian Band (or N'k'mip)	RR#3 Site 25 Comp.1 Oliver	HDX 7000
Oweekeno First Nation	Bag 3500 Port Hardy, Rivers Inlet	VSX 7000
Pavilion / Ts'kw'aylaxw Health Centre	35100 Hwy 99 North Lillooet	VSX 7000
Penelakut / Kuper Island	11316 Clam Bay Road, Chemainus	VSX 7000
Penticton Indian Band	RR#2 Site 80 Comp 19, Penticton	VSX 7000
Qualicum	5850 River Rd. Qualicum Beach	VSX 7000
Quatsino	305 Quattishe Road, Coal Harbour	
Qwemtsin Health Society	130 Chilcotin Rd, Kamloops	VSX 7000
Scw'exmx	103 - 2090 Coutlee Ave, Merritt	QDX 6000
Redstone	Po Box 10, Chilanko Forks	QDX 6000
Seabird Island	PO Box 650, Agassiz	HDX 7000
Sechelt Indian Band	PO Box 740 Sechelt	VSX 7000
Skidegate	PO Box 1348, Skidegate	VSX 7000
Sliammon	4895 Salish Drive, Powell River	VSX 7000
Snuneymuxw	668 B Centre Street, Nanaimo	
Soda Creek	3405 Mountain House Rd, Williams Lake	VSX 7000
Splatsin (Spallumcheen)	Enderby	VSX 7000
Sto:Lo Central	Bldg 7, 7201 Vedder Rd, Chilliwack	HDX 9000
Stz'uminus (Chemainus)	3945 Shell Beach Rd. Ladysmith	VSX 7000
Takla Lake	Takla Lake	HDX 8000
Telegraph Creek	Telegraph Creek	HDX 7000
Three Corners Health Services (Training Room)	Box 4728, Williams Lake	HDX 9000
Three Corners Health Services (Boardroom)	Box 4728, Williams Lake	QDX 6000
Three Voices of Healing - Ktunaxa Tx Ctr	3246 Riverview Rd., Creston	VSX 7000
Tl'azt'en	Box 1899, Fort St James	VSX 7000
Tripartite Meeting Place	240 - 1190 Melville Street, Vancouver	HDX 8000
Tsawout First Nation	7728 Tetayut Rd, Saanichtown	VSX 7000
Tsay Key Dene (currently not connected)	Tsay Keh Dene Nursing Station	VSX 7000
Tsay Key Dene (FNESS Unit)	Tsay Keh Dene	
Tse-shaht	5091 Mission Road, Port Alberni	
Tsilhqot'in National Government	Williams Lake	QDX 6000
T'Souke	Sooke	
Tsow Tun Le Lum Treatment Centre	699 Capilano Rd. Lantzville	VSX 7000
UBC Div. Aboriginal Health, Learning Circle	1190 Hornby St. Vancouver	HDX 8000
Westbank First Nation	1900 Quail Lane, Westbank	VSX 7000
Xaxlip (Fountain) Health	PO Box 2168 Lillooet	VSX 7000

Conclusion

Each consultant presented us with valuable findings and confirmed many good practices evident in LSS PLEI resources.

Decoda Literacy Solutions recognized many examples of good practice that can lead to high readability. At present, we follow plain language guidelines when developing materials, as outlined in the *LSS Style Guide*. Key steps include knowing the audience and understanding their needs, and using straightforward language and appropriate design elements. We often develop audience-specific publications, such as advocate-focused guides and client-focused fact sheets. Decoda also recognized that intake workers were accomplished communicators, and adjusted the pace and content of the interview to accommodate clients. But there is always room for improvement. Decoda made a number of important recommendations both to enhance readability and how our information is communicated.

Habañero Consulting Group found that the FLWS works quite well for intermediaries and professionals familiar with family law. But many members of the general public — a growing audience for online legal resources — require some assistance in using the site. By addressing their needs, LSS can also better meet the needs of more sophisticated users. Habañero recommended changes to help to further advance FLWS usability and continue to build on already implemented improvements to navigability.

Although Sa’hetxw Consulting acknowledged that LSS already works to ensure Aboriginal audiences are addressed, it identified that LSS needs to focus on online access. We need to use technology to deliver legal aid services to Aboriginal communities, as outlined in our service plan. In order to engage effectively with our Aboriginal audience, we need easily accessible Aboriginal online content. Furthermore, our online information needs to be presented in a way that is easy to read and should include visuals and voice that are culturally relevant.

In conclusion, we recognize that our audiences and their needs are changing rapidly. These accessibility initiatives reports will give us a road map to guide our development of PLEI resources for the foreseeable future.