



## **Braille Literacy Canada Celebrates World Braille Day**

**(TORONTO, ON, January 4, 2023)** --- Braille Literacy Canada, the Canadian Braille Authority, celebrates World Braille Day, commemorating the birth of Louis Braille on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1809, whose system of tactile reading and writing brought literacy to those who are blind. The invention of braille has opened numerous doors for blind and low vision people around the world, and is officially recognized as a day to be commemorated each year on January 4<sup>th</sup> by the United Nations. Since its invention, braille has continued to evolve alongside print, including the many technological developments that now provide electronic access to braille.

“Access to braille and braille education is essential for developing skills in literacy. Braille enables the reader to actively participate in the reading process, allowing people who are blind and partially sighted to see how text is formatted, to edit and easily re-read their copy, to learn punctuation, spelling and grammar. Hands on braille facilitates learning in a way that audio files and audio books cannot replicate”, states Daphne Hitchcock, educator for students who have visual impairments and President of Braille Literacy Canada.

In celebration of World Braille Day, BLC has recently endorsed the newly developed [Mi'kmaw braille code](#), which will increase access to braille within indigenous communities. Alongside other partners, BLC will commemorate World Braille Day through a number of scheduled virtual activities that will take place throughout the month of January and that are open to all who are interested. These events are free of charge; for more information and the registration for each event visit: [English Site](#) | [French Site](#)

Braille Literacy Canada remains committed to promote and support the widespread use and availability of braille for all those who read it. BLC continues to offer a virtual peer-support monthly program for adult braille learners across Canada; a program that reimburses individuals for the purchase of French print-braille books; a quarterly newsletter to highlight important braille updates; workshops of interest to the vast Canadian braille community, alongside other community-led initiatives. BLC also remains active in advocacy, providing consultation and direction on policies at the governmental level, including the approval of guidelines to expand access to braille signage and other vital information in braille.

While these advancements are to be celebrated, BLC also highlights the importance of expanding and protecting access to braille for the thousands of Canadians who read it.

As the population continues to age, it will become increasingly important to ensure that education and rehabilitation programs provide access to braille instruction, including in remote regions of Canada and that funding is provided to ensure accessible and equitable access to braille in libraries and other institutions.

Like print, braille equals literacy. Today, Canadians who are blind, deafblind and who have low vision celebrate equitable access to literacy through braille.

You can learn more about braille and BLC by visiting [www.brailleliteracycanada.ca](http://www.brailleliteracycanada.ca)

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*Braille Literacy Canada / Litt ratie braille Canada, founded in 1990 as the Canadian Braille Authority, is a national charitable organization dedicated to the promotion of braille as the primary medium of literacy for those who are blind or visually impaired. BLC is recognized by the International Council on English Braille as the authority for the development, adoption, and establishment of standards relating to braille in Canada. With a membership comprising organizations and individuals, educators, braille transcribers, braille producers, parents of braille users and braille users themselves, BLC represents a broad cross-section of those working with or impacted by braille and is lead by a volunteer board of directors elected by the BLC membership.*

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