

# Literacy linked with play at Ruth King

By Mary Ellen Green - *Goldstream News Gazette*

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This year's theme for national Family Literacy Day is "Play for Literacy," and families will be doing just that at Ruth King elementary school Sunday.

In celebration of Family Literacy Day, the READ Society, in conjunction with Capital Families Association and the Learning Connection West Shore are inviting families of all shapes, sizes and demographics to come out the family game-a-thon in the school gym between 1 and 5 p.m.

"Last year was our first celebration in recent memory, but it was mostly geared towards our students at the READ Society," said Tayna Demmings, READ Society communications coordinator. "This year we wanted to open it up to the community."

Upwards of 25 different board, card and dice games have been donated for the event by local businesses. A jumbo chess game and Uno tournament will also draw competitors. And face painter Christina Cheply will be on hand to give those who wish a new persona. Kid-friendly snacks and fair-trade coffee will be available.

"Some people ask me why they should come to this when they can play board games at home. I tell them it builds community and gives people a chance to meet their neighbours," Demmings said.

Ruth King principal, Garry Manhas agrees. "We have a long relationship with the READ Society, and I think it's a great idea. We want to get kids involved in reading and engage their parents at the same time," he said. "It means a lot to children if parents participate in these types of activities with them, reading them a book or listening to them read a story. It's great modeling, and this is a great opportunity to learn some games and take that knowledge home."

Family Literacy Day is an annual initiative developed by ABC Life Literacy Canada to encourage parents and children to spend at least 15 minutes daily enjoying a learning activity.

"Last year, more than 300,000 people across Canada participated in the event," Demmings said. Admission is \$5 per family or pay-what-you-can. "We want people to come regardless if they can make a donation," Demmings said. "But we do have some costs we need to recoup."

The event is Sunday, Jan. 30 at Ruth King school, 2764 Jacklin Rd. in Langford. For more information, visit [www.readsociety.bc.ca](http://www.readsociety.bc.ca).

[reporter@goldstreamgazette.com](mailto:reporter@goldstreamgazette.com)