

# Lost & Found.®

Pandemic stories of discovery  
as told by kids in Canada.

## Impact Report



Canadian  
Children's  
Literacy  
Foundation

Fondation pour  
l'alphabétisation  
des enfants  
canadiens

Funded by the  
Government  
of Canada

Financé par le  
gouvernement  
du Canada

Canada 

# Program overview

**Lost & Found**®

Pandemic stories of discovery  
as told by kids in Canada.



*Lost & Found* was a national storytelling project, led by the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation in collaboration with a diverse coalition of mental health and child-serving organizations. This initiative was created to give children in Canada a platform to showcase their COVID-19 pandemic stories and to address the growing gaps in children's literacy skills. Children who participate in storytelling and have stories told to them are more likely to succeed in school and beyond.

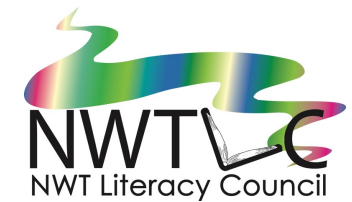
The guidance and support of community partners and the dedication of educators across Canada, made the *Lost & Found* project a success.

The project helped children connect with their own emotions and experiences, which will allow them to better understand and engage with their communities, all of which promote literacy skills for children.



# Advisory Committee

A diverse coalition of mental health and child-serving organizations with representation from across Canada advised the *Lost & Found* project.



The project created a dynamic, inclusive environment that fosters growth and creativity. It has been a privilege to be a part of this initiative, and I look forward to seeing the positive impact it will continue to have on the lives of children for many years to come.”

– Lisa Prinn, Manager, Education & Activation, The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund (*Lost & Found* Advisory Committee member)



# Together, we achieved our goals

Delivery partners offered workshops in-person and online spanning every province and territory in Canada

## British Columbia

1. BGC Okanagan
2. Mount Waddington Family Literacy Society
3. South Vancouver Neighbourhood House
4. Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
5. BGC South Vancouver Island
6. BGC Central Vancouver Island

## Yukon

7. BGC Yukon

## Northwest Territories

8. NWT Literacy Council

## Alberta

9. BGC Airdrie
10. BGC St. Paul
11. BGC Cochrane
12. BGC Whitecourt
13. Centre for Family Literacy

## Saskatchewan

14. BGC Yorkton

## Nunavut

15. Story Planet / Connected North

## Manitoba

16. Peaceful Village

## Ontario

17. BGC Brantford
18. BGC Eastview
19. BGC Hamilton-Halton
20. BGC Niagara
21. BGC Durham
22. GritLit Readers and Writers Festival
23. Multiple Births Canada
24. Baxter Arts Centre
25. Children's Reading Room
26. Children's Book Bank
27. Agincourt Community Services Association
28. Malvern Family Resource Centre
29. Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
30. Toronto Foundation for Student Success

## Quebec

31. Walkley Community Centre
32. NDG Community Council – Papa et Moi

## New Brunswick

33. BGC Dieppe
34. BGC Charlotte County

## Newfoundland and Labrador

35. BGC Botwood
36. BGC Gander
37. BGC St. Anthony

## Nova Scotia

38. Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia
39. YMCA of Greater Halifax/Dartmouth

## Prince Edward Island

40. BGC Charlottetown and Montague



“ We understand how hard the pandemic was on us as adults and this program shows a far lasting impact on the children. The *Lost & Found* program gave our youth the chance to express what they were feeling in an environment of safety and support. It was a great program.”

– Lori Elliott, Program Coordinator, BGC Gander (*Lost & Found* delivery partner organization)



# Our workshop curriculum

The trauma-informed curriculum was designed in partnership with Story Planet, a non-profit organization that offers creative writing workshops to children in equity-seeking communities.

The curriculum encouraged kids and families to create their own narrative through activities that help them identify their emotions and memories, learn how to develop a story, and share their creations through the exhibit if desired.

**Lost & Found Curriculum Guide**  
For facilitators working with 7-12 year olds

Running the Lost & Found workshop should be fun and straightforward—and all

This guide will walk you through each step-by-step activity, lead each activity, and more. Throughout, you'll find helpful tips and information.

Let's get started!

**Station Setup**

**Launch Pad**  
Start and end here

- Memory and Emotion Cards (tools for participants, details on page 7)
- Story Transporter, for participants to contribute their work to the Lost & Found project (more details on pages 7 & 8)
- Drawing/colouring tools for kids to decorate the Story Transporter (optional)

**Planet 1**  
Writing & Drawing

**Planet 2**  
Oral Story-making

**Planet 3**  
Storymaking through movement

**Planet 3**

- "Show Us, Act Out, and Move Like" Prompt Cards
- Props and dress-up items (optional)
- Guidelines for recording video and audio & recording device(s)
- Extra set of Emotion Cards (optional)

**Planet 2**

- "Tell Us" Prompt Cards
- Guidelines for audio interviews and stories, recording device(s)
- Extra set of Emotion Cards (optional)

**Emotion Cards**

Angry	Bored	Calm	Confused
Happy	Hurt	Lonely	Nervous
Sad	Scared	Sleepy	Surprised
Frustrated	Excited	Proud	

**Lost & Found**  
Pandemic stories of discovery as told by kids in Canada.

Canada belongs to:

Supported by the Government of Canada | Canada | story planet



# Engaging workshops for children and their families

Educators taught children and their families how to express their emotions and memories through writing, art, movement, and oral story-making to create their own pandemic narrative.

Artists and authors participated in the workshops and the celebratory wrap-up events where the children's stories were displayed.



“The flexibility of the program allowed children to explore their experiences and create rich stories to share with one another. They were able to see that they shared many similar experiences and felt safe talking about them.”

– Gabriele Cole, Program Manager, Baxter Arts Centre (*Lost & Found* delivery partner organization)

# Lost & Found reached thousands of children

The *Lost & Found* project surpassed its goals thanks to the contributions of all the partners.

**5,179**  
children

**1,135**  
parents/  
caregivers

**1,584**  
curated  
stories



**40**  
delivery  
partners

**5**  
celebratory  
launch events

**118**  
educators



# The digital exhibit: [lostandfoundstories.ca](https://lostandfoundstories.ca)

The exhibit features curated stories of children about their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are also videos of educators and parents sharing their perspectives on the impact of the pandemic and the benefits of the *Lost & Found* project.

These stories will be archived to help future generations understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canada's children.

In addition, the website includes free downloadable resources on early literacy and storytelling for educators and parents to help children continue to build their literacy skills.

## "Why can't I play with my friends?"

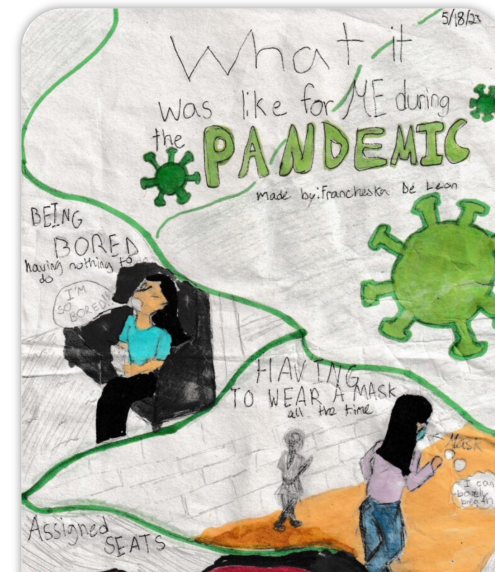
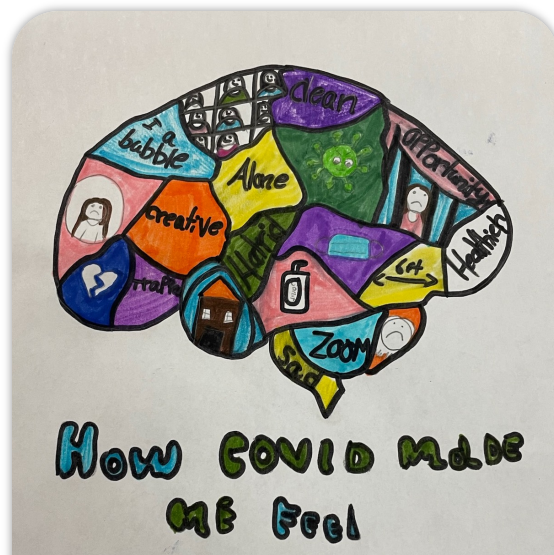
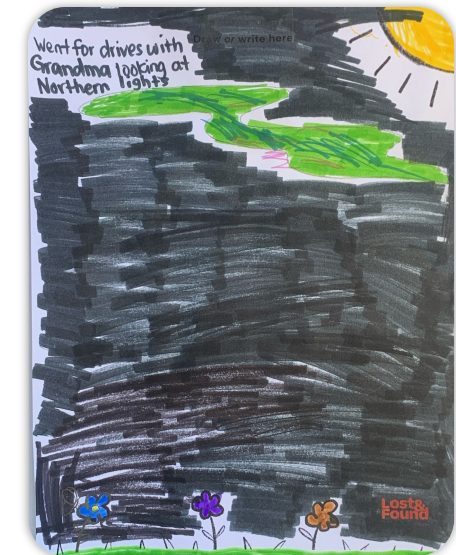
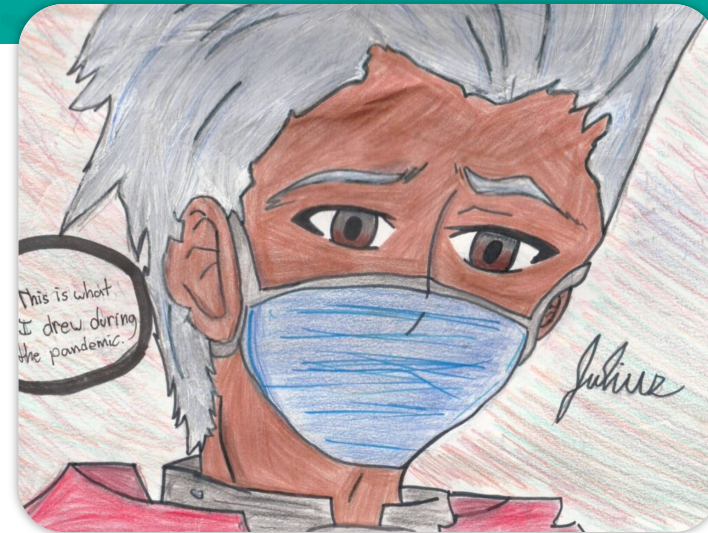
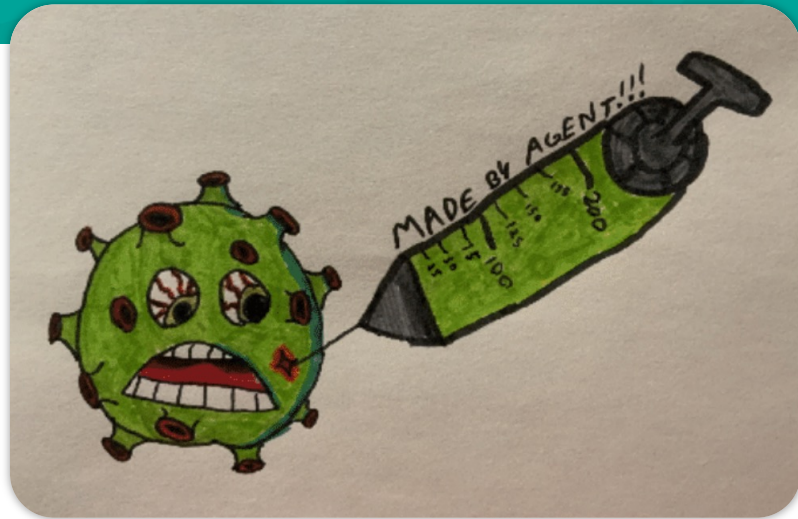
During lockdowns at home, kids missed being at school, spending time with friends, enjoying hobbies and after school activities, and celebrating important milestones, like birthdays parties. Many playgrounds were closed, blocked off with yellow caution tape. Kids recall feeling many emotions during the pandemic.





# A platform just for children

The exhibit was organized by themes that surfaced in the children's submissions: emotions, quality time, health, nature and technology.



# Program impact

With the support of community partners, the *Lost & Found* project had far-reaching impacts on children, their parents and caregivers, and the communities where the workshops and celebrations took place. Our evaluation found that:



Children began to see themselves as storytellers – an integral part of early literacy development



Parents and caregivers experienced a deeper understanding of their child's experiences during the pandemic



People who viewed the children's stories felt a sense of pride in how families in Canada responded to the pandemic



Funds distributed to community partners helped them re-build post-pandemic and boosted the local economy



Participants developed a greater understanding of the importance of early literacy skills



# Lost & Found in the media

Stories about the project reached people from coast to coast to coast on television, radio, and online.



**Canadian children's pandemic experiences shared in online exhibit**

CBC  
March 11, 2023 · 2 min read

The Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation has launched a new online gallery to share children's stories from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**All in a Weekend with Sonali Karnick**

Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation: "

▶ Play Segment 8:43

Aired: April 2, 2023

**Colonel Chris Hadfield on a new digital exhibit close to his heart**

BT breakfast television

On the show > In Case You Missed It

Live

Colonel Chris Hadfield  
Retired Astronaut, Children's Author

8:52 OTTAWA → 7° MONTREAL → 7° QUÉBEC CITY → 5°

**The Early Edition with Stephen Quinn**

Pandemic Stories of Discovery as Told by Kid

▶ Play Segment 5:56

Aired: March 10, 2023

**Fresh Air with Ismaila Alfa**

Lost and Found: A child's perspective of

▶ Play Segment 8:22

**New online gallery and art about COVID-19**

COVID19VIRUS | News

The Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation has launched a new online gallery to share children's stories from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Launched Tuesday by The Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation, the **Lost & Found** digital exhibit currently features more than 1,000 stories collected from kids across the country.

"There were nights of endless sickness, vaccines, quarantine, isolation," 10-year-old Charlotte wrote in Newfoundland. "Everyone was bored out of their minds."

**1400+ kids share their pandemic stories through art in new online gallery**

CBC KIDS NEWS

A new online gallery called **Lost & Found** is showcasing artworks from kids across Canada about their pandemic experiences. (Image credit: Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation)

Published May 22

**Helping children tell their story of pandemic life**

GUELPH TODAY

In this Following Up feature, we touch base with the co-founders of the Children's Reading Room as it prepares to launch a new initiative

Ariel Deutschmann  
Nov 22, 2022 8:00 AM

1 of 2 - Young children gather for story time in the Children's Reading Room, located at 210 Silvercreek Pkwy. | GuelphToday file photo/Ariel Deutschmann.

# Lost & Found on social media

High-profile influencers like Margaret Atwood and Justin Trudeau helped promote *Lost & Found* on social media.



# Our YouTube Channel

Nearly 200,000 people learned about the *Lost & Found* project and its impacts through compelling videos.



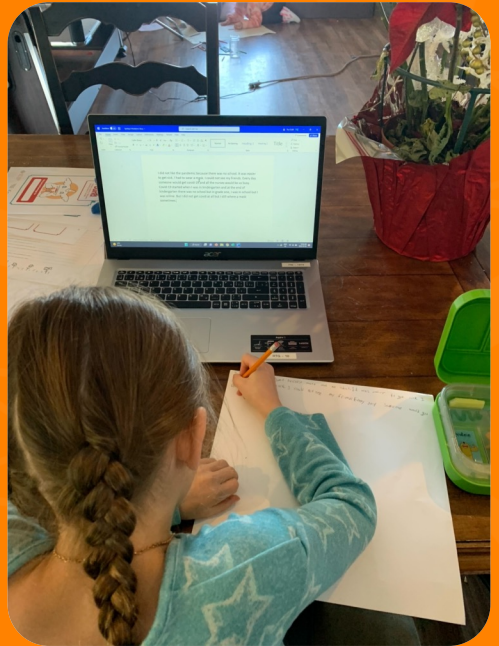
Animated PSA



Highlight Video



Retrospective Video





# Thank you!

The success of this program was due in large part to community partners and educators who facilitated the storytelling workshops, taught children how to express their feelings about the pandemic and gathered stories of their pandemic experiences.

By archiving *Lost & Found* stories in the National Archives of Canada, we have captured a moment in our history for future generations.

Thank you again for your support of the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation, the *Lost & Found* project, and, most importantly, children!

This was made possible by the Government of Canada, through the Canadian Heritage Department's Celebration and Commemoration Program Reopening Fund.

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