

Your generosity helps Islanders learn to read

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You don't have to look far to see how important reading is. Highway signs. E-mails. Tax bills. All of them are incomprehensible to someone who can't read.

Yet more than three million Canadians have trouble reading simple printed material such as prescription drug directions. And for those who suffer from it, that kind of functional illiteracy has a profound impact on everything from personal safety to earning power.

That is why dozens of us in Victoria and 26 other Canadian cities will take to the streets today as part of Postmedia's Raise-a-Reader program. We'll be giving away copies of the Times Colonist in exchange for a donation. And all the money you give us will go to literacy organizations on Vancouver Island. Last year alone our team from the Times Colonist and our partners in the community raised \$240,000 for organizations that ranged from school libraries to the Victoria READ Society, all of which help people on Vancouver Island learn to read.

Across Canada, Raise-a-Reader has raised \$15 million for family literacy programs since its national launch in 2002. So look for people in bright orange T-shirts downtown or at one of the participating Peninsula Co-ops this morning. The money you donate will help more Vancouver Islanders learn to read.

Thank you in advance for your support.

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