



Literacy for Life: Bridging the Gaps to Success for a Fair and Inclusive Society



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What we'll cover today

- Introduction to ABC Life Literacy Canada
- What is literacy
- Types of literacy
- Aligning Literacy Programs with Societal Goals
- How does ABC Bridge the Gap
- Program Impacts
- ABC resources to share
- Q&A

ABC Life Literacy Canada

Vision:

We envision a Canada where everyone has the skills and opportunities to fully participate in learning, life, and work.

ABC Life Literacy Canada is here to support Canadian literacy practitioners

ABC Life Literacy Canada champions literacy in Canada by empowering adult learners, raising awareness, and by collaborating with the supporting the adult learning sector.

What is Literacy?

“...the ability to understand and use a wide range of materials to engage fully in activities and opportunities at home, at work , and in the community”

- United for Literacy, 2022

- Workplace
- Family
- Community

Literacy had the most notable effect when measured against other factors that affect differences in pay, followed by education (Literacy in the Information Age: Final Report of the International Adult Literacy Survey – OECD and Statistics Canada, 2000).

Types of Literacy

- Financial Literacy
- Digital Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Cultural Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Workplace Literacy
- Family Literacy



Aligning Literacy Programs with Societal Goals

- Poverty reduction
- Promoting justice and equity
- Fostering Diversity and Inclusion
- Empowering Individuals with Essential Life Skills

The Link between Literacy and Poverty Reduction

- Literacy levels and socioeconomic status
- Almost half of adult Canadians struggle with literacy

Poverty is linked to:

- Limited academic opportunities
- Reduced ability to develop skills for lifelong learning
- Barriers to employment
- Earning potential

Promoting Justice and Equity

- Effects of low literacy rates particularly felt by marginalized communities
- Indigenous people disproportionately affected by poverty and social exclusion
- Newcomers to Canada face barriers accessing literacy programs
- Individuals with disabilities experience challenges seeking accommodations and resources
- Enabling individuals to understand, engage and challenge systems and structures

Fostering Diversity and Inclusion

- More than 450 ethnic of cultural origins reported in the 2021 census
- Improve learning outcomes, engagement and learner satisfaction
- More likely to achieve academic success
- Improve Diversity and Inclusion through Cultural Literacy

Empowering learners with essential life skills

Financial Literacy

4 in 10 Canadians report that money is a daily concern, and a third of low-income families report worrying about money almost constantly (Canadians and their Money – Financial Planning Standards Council, 2016).

Digital Literacy

Estimates say that around 84% of jobs in Canada currently require the use of a computer and basic technical skills (Information and Communications Technology Council, 2016) and that even low-skilled jobs increasingly require a basic level of digital literacy (Essential Skills Ontario).

Health Literacy

23% of Canadians find it “fairly difficult” or “very difficult” to find out where to get professional help when they are ill, and 54% find it “fairly difficult” or “very difficult” to judge when to seek a second opinion from another doctor (Consumer Health Products Canada, 2017).

How does ABC work to bridge the gap to success?

- Research
- Ongoing community feedback
- Community Input
- Updates
- Review, review, review



Program Impacts

Jean Tweed Centre

- Provides treatment and support for women to overcome challenges with substance use, gambling and mental health
- Used *Money Matters* materials to learn financial literacy skills

Program Impacts

Hay River Library

- 70 learners for the *Money Matters* workshops, all identified as Indigenous
- Learned about cashing Government of Canada cheques

Conclusion

- Summary:
 - Literacy is a fundamental tool for empowerment, inclusion, and social change
- Call to action:
 - Do research
 - Speak to the community
 - Share the work you're doing!



Thank you!

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