

## Literacy: Why it Matters

In celebration of International Literacy Day 2018, Community Literacy of Ontario is pleased to have developed "Literacy: Why it Matters" to showcase the importance of literacy to our province, and to share the interconnections between literacy, health, poverty, employment, the economy, and more. These are issues that matter and they impact Ontario's citizens and our province in profound ways.

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Literacy Skills        | 7. Employment              |
| 2. Numeracy Skills        | 8. Jobs of the Future      |
| 3. Poverty                | 9. Justice and Corrections |
| 4. Grade 10 Literacy Test | 10. Digital Literacy       |
| 5. High School Graduation | 11. Civic Engagement       |
| 6. Health                 | 12. The Economy            |



www.communityliteracyontario.ca  
 (705) 733-2512 do@bellnet.ca

Facebook: @CommunityLiteracyOntario  
 Instagram: @love4literacy Twitter: @love4literacy



*Presents:*

# A Look at Literacy: Why It Matters!

## Literacy Why It Matters

- ▶ Literacy: Why It Matters (LWIM) was created by Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) to showcase the importance of literacy and its link to poverty, health, employment, the economy and more
- ▶ LWIM is freely available on CLO's website at:  
[www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/literacy-why-it-matters/](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/literacy-why-it-matters/)
- ▶ LWIM sources are available at the end of the presentation



80 Bradford Street, Suite 508, Barrie, Ontario L4N 6S7

TEL 705-733-2312 | FAX 705-733-6197

EMAIL [clo@bellnet.ca](mailto:clo@bellnet.ca) | WEBSITE [www.communityliteracyofontario.ca](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca)

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## About Community Literacy of Ontario

- ▶ CLO is a provincial network of 100 community-based literacy agencies in Ontario
  
- ▶ Learn all more at:
  - ▶ Web: [www.communityliteracyofontario.ca](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca)
  - ▶ Facebook: [www.facebook.com/CommunityLiteracyOntario](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityLiteracyOntario)
  - ▶ Twitter: [twitter.com/Love4Literacy](https://twitter.com/Love4Literacy)
  - ▶ Instagram: [www.instagram.com/love4literacy](https://www.instagram.com/love4literacy)

## How to use this presentation

This presentation is meant to be edited! While this presentation includes many statistics about literacy in Ontario and Canada, we encourage you to add in your own local statistics and your program statistics and pictures.

### **How to edit this presentation:**

Simply open the presentation with Microsoft PowerPoint and make your edits!

Remember to add in your organization's name, logo and contact information.

*Don't forget to delete this slide before you present!* 



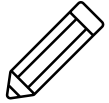
## Literacy Skills in Ontario

Literacy is an essential skill in 21st century Ontario. However, many people in our province do not have the literacy skills that they need for home, work, and life.

**15% of Ontarians scored at or below Literacy Level 1**



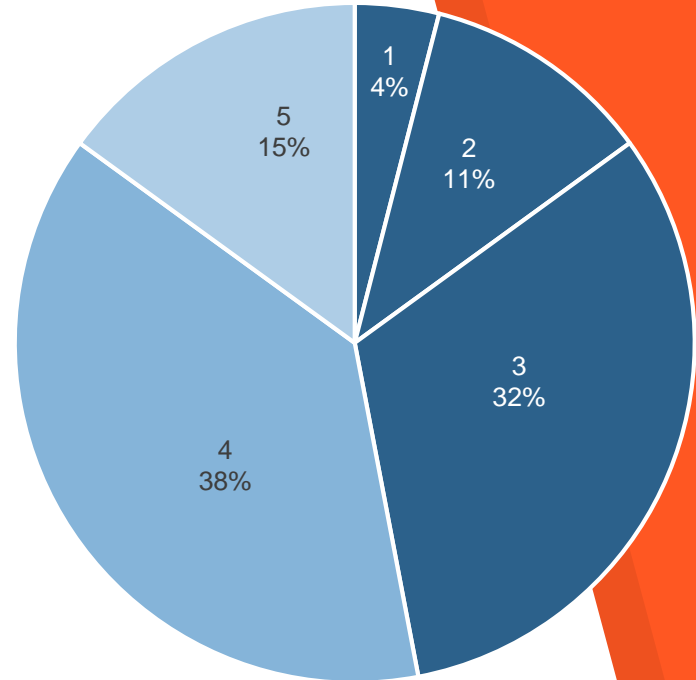
1 in 6 (or 15%) of Ontarians aged 16 to 65 scored at or below Literacy Level 1. People scoring at this level struggle with very serious literacy challenges, and have trouble reading even the most basic text.



## Literacy Skills in Ontario

47% of Ontarians scored at or below Literacy Level 2.

At Literacy Level 2, people can read, but with difficulty and will likely have problems with basic forms and directions encountered in everyday life such as employment or rental agreements, medication instructions, and more.



Literacy levels of Ontario adults, aged 16 to 65

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“I went to a literacy program because I was tired of people telling me that I was stupid and that I didn't know anything. I guess I proved them all wrong! I am doing better now and I am proud of myself.



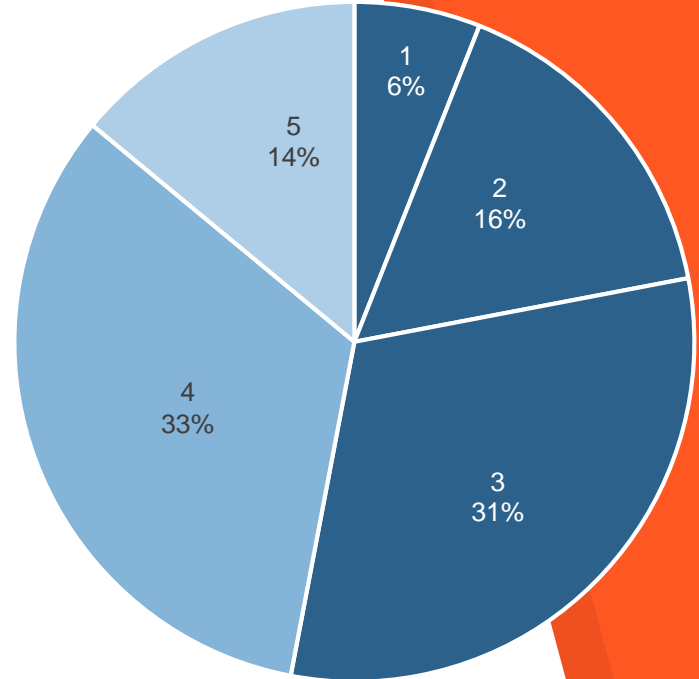


## Numeracy Skills in Ontario

People scoring at, or below, Numeracy Level 1 have very limited math skills.

Those at numeracy Level 2 have difficulty accomplishing commonly needed numeracy tasks.

People require at least Level 3 numeracy skills to function well in modern Canadian society, but 53% of adults in Ontario score below Level 3.



Numeracy levels of Ontario adults, aged 16 to 65



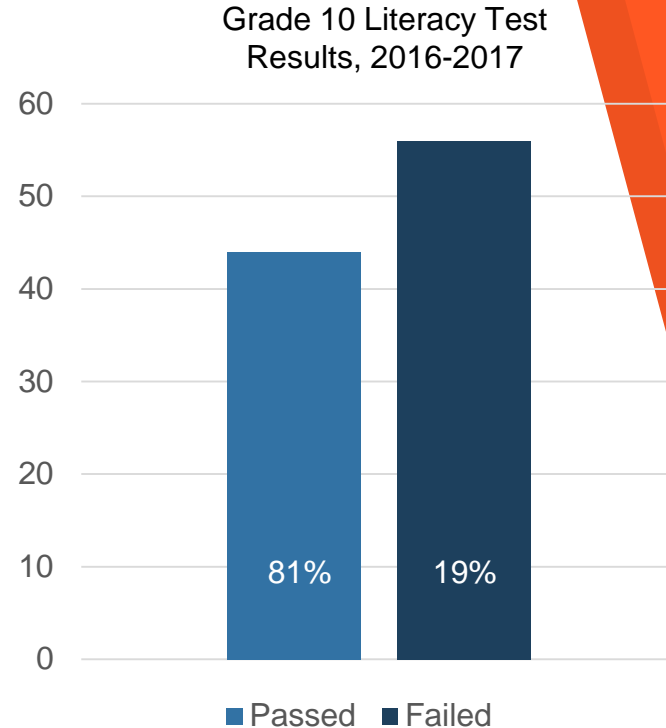


## Grade 10 Literacy Test Results

The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) measures whether high school students are meeting the minimum standard for literacy.

Successful completion of the literacy test is one of the requirements to earn an Ontario Secondary School Diploma.

In 2016-2017, **81%** of all Grade 10 students who wrote the OSSLT were successful; **19%** were unsuccessful.

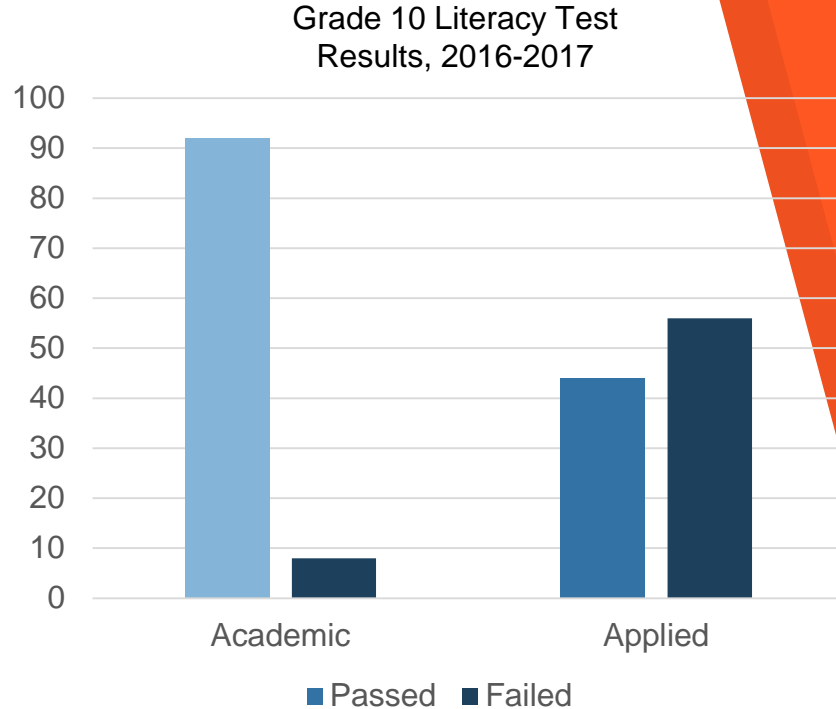




## Grade 10 Literacy Test Results

When looking at success rates in academic versus applied course types, there is a large difference in success with the OSSLT.

92% of students taking academic level courses passed the literacy test, while only 44% of students taking applied courses were successful.



“

I can do my own work: grocery shopping, banking and being more independent. In the future I hope to become a great person and also to get a good job.



## Literacy and Health Outcomes

The impact of low literacy levels on health is a very serious issue.

Canadians with the lowest levels of literacy are **more than twice as likely** to be in poor health compared to Canadians with higher literacy skills.



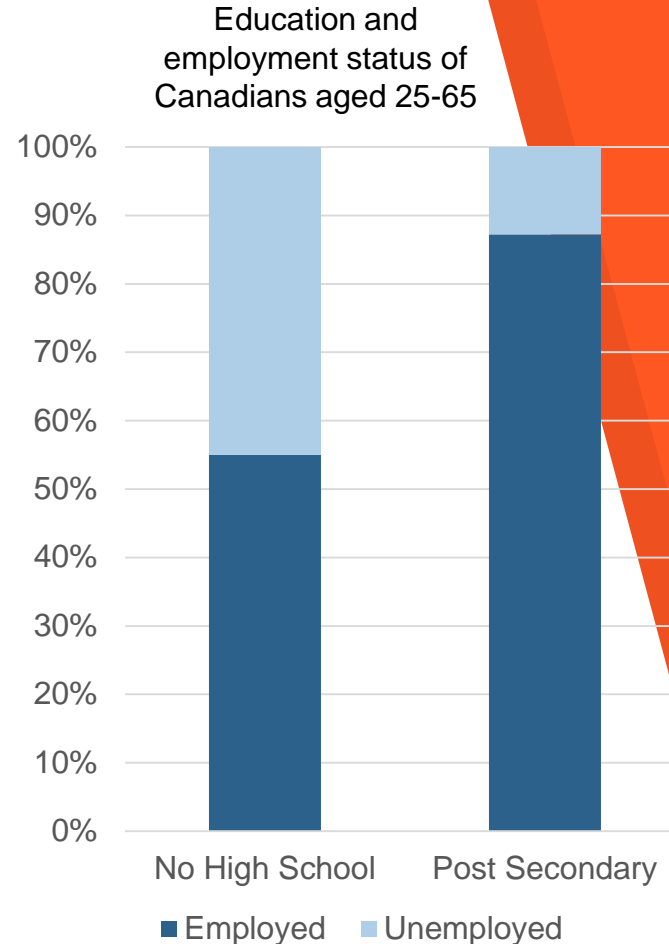


## Literacy and Employment

Educational attainment is strongly related to employment.

In 2016, only **55%** of Canadians aged 25-64 who did not complete high school were employed. Conversely, the employment rate was **82%** for those who had obtained a college or university credential.

In addition, 45% of Canadians working in precarious or “no contract” work have completed a high-school diploma or less.



“

In my literacy class, I'm getting the help I've always needed. I'm doing better than I ever have in the past. I plan to get my GED and get a better job for myself down the road.”



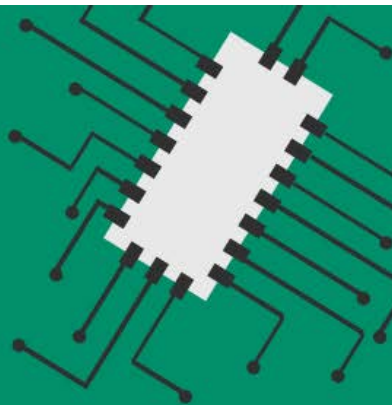


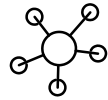
## Jobs of the Future

People with low literacy skills may be particularly disadvantaged in the labour market of the future. Robotics and artificial intelligence are dramatically changing the workplace and increasing the demand for high-skilled workers.

The demand for high-skilled workers is up 19% since 1998 but the need for low-skilled workers is down 11% over the same period.

Based on Canada's levels of literacy and numeracy, **many Canadians do not currently have the literacy, numeracy and digital skills needed for the jobs of the future.**





## Literacy and the Economy

Higher levels of literacy lead to a stronger Canadian economy, an increased gross domestic product, an enhanced competitive advantage, improved workplace safety, and a more productive workforce.

Literacy provides a substantial socio-economic return on investment.

Canada could save an estimated **\$542 million every year** in just social assistance spending by raising every Canadian adult to Level 3 literacy.

(Source: From Poverty to Prosperity: Literacy's Impact on Canada's Economic Success, 2011)





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Since going to a literacy program, it is much easier to cope with life and I don't know how I survived with the education that I had. I can figure things out for myself and I don't have to ask so many questions any more.

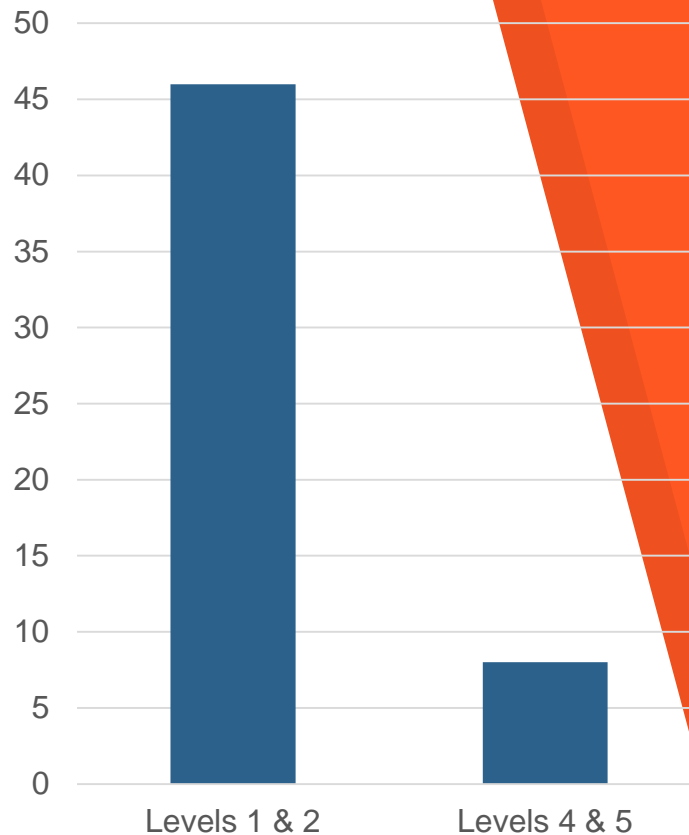




## Literacy and Poverty

The relationship between literacy skill level and the likelihood of living in poverty is strong.

46% of adults at the lowest literacy levels live in low income households. While only 8% of adults at the highest literacy levels live in low income households.



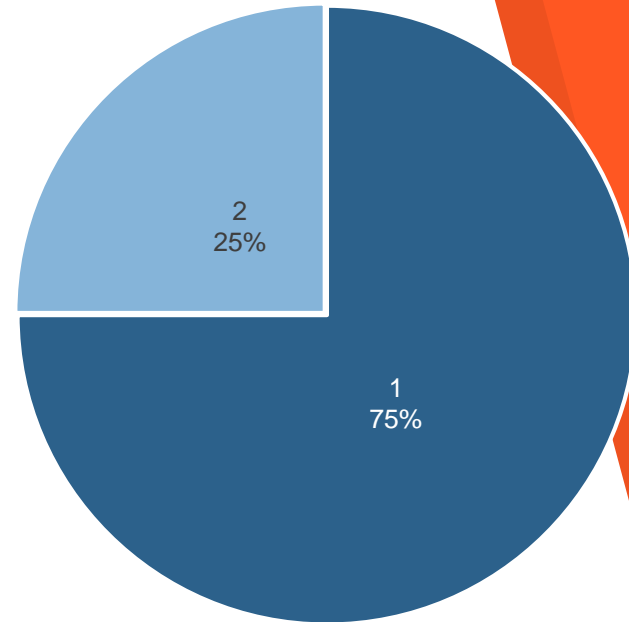
Percent of adults living in low income households, by literacy level



## Literacy, Justice and Corrections

Three quarters of offenders admitted to federal custody had an education level of less than grade 12.

Correctional Services Canada notes that when educational programming is provided to inmates, it results in reduced recidivism, better release outcomes, and improved future employment opportunities



Education level of offenders admitted to federal custody

“

Thanks to my new found skills and self-esteem, I feel more capable to go out and find a great job that I am worthy of.

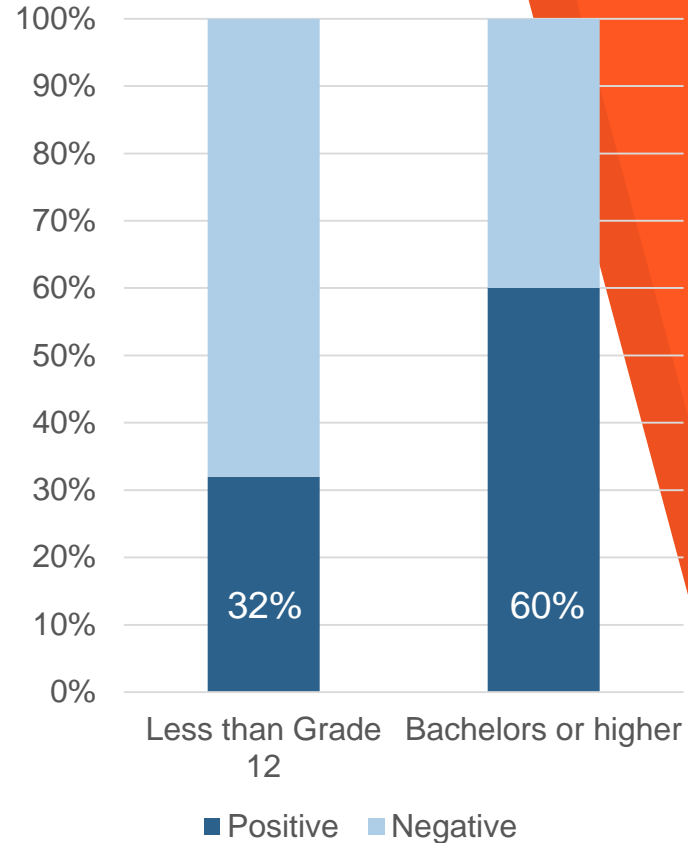




## Literacy and Civic Engagement

Positive political efficacy dramatically rises with increased education and skills.

The level of political efficacy was measured by whether people disagree or agree with the statement *“People like me don’t have any say about what the government does.”*



Positive political efficacy by education level

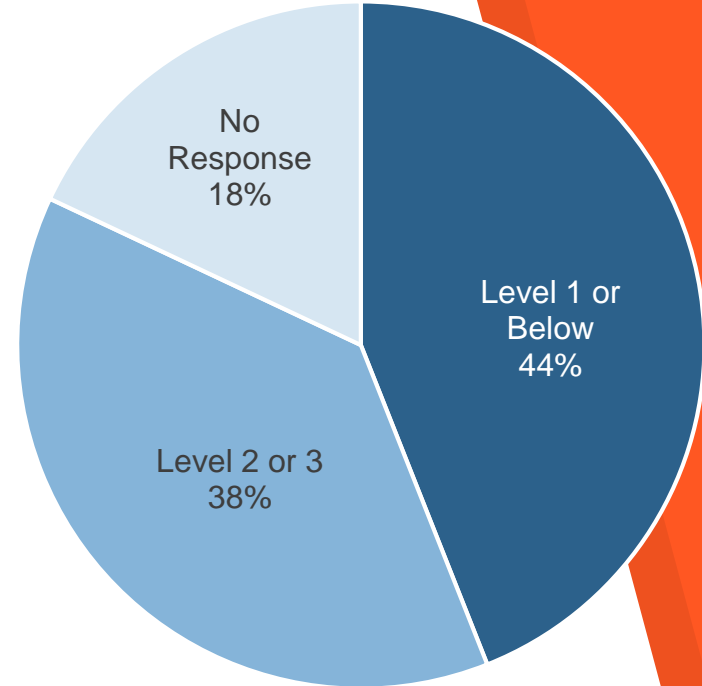


## Digital Literacy

Digital literacy is an issue in Ontario. While skills are rising, there is much room for improvement.

An international survey measured “*Problem Solving in a Technology Rich Environment*” (PS-TRE).

In our province, **44%** of Ontarians scored at the lowest levels (at, or below, PS-TRE Level 1), while 38% scored at Level 2 or 3 (the two highest levels), and 18% did not respond.



Results for Ontario adults in the “*Problem Solving in a Technology Rich Environment*” survey

“

Literacy has helped me to read the newspaper. Now I am able to give my own opinions about what is going on in the world.



## An Overview of Ontario's Literacy and Basic Skills Program

- ▶ There is a strong need to increase literacy and numeracy levels in Ontario. In response, Ontario's Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities funds the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program.
- ▶ The program serves adults who want to improve their literacy and numeracy skills to achieve their goals of post-secondary education and training, employment, apprenticeship, secondary school credit, or independence.
- ▶ The LBS program is provided free of charge and is delivered through a variety of methods including one-to-one tutoring, small group and classroom instruction, and by online learning, via e-Channel.





*“Today I can say I can read and write and no longer do I avoid and hide from the world.”*



## **Next Steps**

- ▶ Learn more about Ontario’s Literacy and Basic Skills program at:  
<http://tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/eopg/programs/lbs.html>
- ▶ Find local Literacy and Basic Skills programs at:  
[www.ontario.ca/page/adult-learning](http://www.ontario.ca/page/adult-learning)





## The Sources

All statistics and information referred to in this presentation were originally published in "Literacy Why It Matters". Find the publication and all sources online at:

[www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/literacy-why-it-matters](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/literacy-why-it-matters)

**AVAILABLE NOW!**

CLO is pleased to present:  
**More Than Words Can Say**  
 The updated "Literacy: Why It Matters" for 2018.

**COMMUNITY LITERACY OF ONTARIO**

**More Than Words Can Say**  
 September 2018

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2. Necessary Skills
3. Poverty
4. Grade 10 Literacy Test
5. High School Graduation
6. Health
7. Employment
8. Jobs of the Future
9. Justice and Corrections
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www.communityliteracyofontario.ca  
 (905) 733-0338 • info@clon.ca

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 #MoreThanWords

## Acknowledgements to Our Funders

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"This is Jackie. I am learning. I have literacy people & others help me. I need help for now but one day, I can do it on my own. Do not give up on us!"