

**“Literacy is a fundamental life skill, one that serves as a portal to knowledge and a lifetime of opportunity.”**

– Story Shares

## A LOOK AT LITERACY | FACT SHEET

**Literacy** is the ability to read, write, speak and listen – as well as to use numeracy and technology – at a level that enables people to express and understand ideas and opinions, to make decisions and solve problems, to achieve their goals, and to participate fully in their community and in wider society.

### New Brunswick

According to the 2014 PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) results around 50% of Anglophones and 60% of Francophones in New Brunswick fell between reading levels 0 to 2.<sup>1</sup>

Scores in that range mean the person has limited skills and can only comprehend information that is simple and clearly laid out. In other words, they are functionally illiterate.<sup>1</sup>

According to the 2015 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) results, which tests 15-year olds, New Brunswick came in 7<sup>th</sup> place in Canada – well below the Canadian average in both reading and mathematics.<sup>2</sup>

### Literacy at home

- Literacy affects health. Canadians with stronger literacy skills enjoy better health.<sup>7</sup> Literacy skills help people find, understand and use health information.<sup>5</sup>
- Both literacy and numeracy are important skills for managing personal finances.<sup>12, 17</sup>

- Literacy matters for understanding rights and responsibilities. It helps people understand what to do in a variety of situations including legal.<sup>6</sup>
- A literate home environment helps develop children’s literacy skills.<sup>4</sup> Having books available and reading aloud at home supports children’s long-term literacy skills.<sup>10, 14</sup>

### Literacy at Work

- Strong literacy skills are connected to better employment opportunities.<sup>16, 18</sup>
- Better literacy skills are also associated with higher wages.<sup>9, 11</sup>
- Understanding health and safety instructions can be critical for personal safety and that of co-workers.<sup>3</sup>
- Improving literacy skills can increase efficiency and accuracy at work and reduce work-related stress.<sup>8</sup>
- People with stronger literacy skills are more likely to participate in job-related training.<sup>13, 15</sup>

### Literacy in the Community

- Canadians with stronger literacy skills are more likely to volunteer.<sup>7</sup>
- Better literacy skills can play a role in developing a sense of community participation, and inclusion.<sup>7</sup>



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*Each one, teach one.*



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