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British Columbia News

Expanding adult literacy programs throughout B.C.

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/29413>

People looking to improve their lives through improved reading, writing, math and digital skills will benefit from increased access to free adult literacy programs throughout B.C.

“Improving literacy and numeracy skills is a large step forward that has a massive impact on people’s quality of life, improving job and career prospects and thriving in B.C.’s robust and strong economy,” said Selina Robinson, Minister of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills. “This investment will connect people with the skills they need to take the next step in their educational and career journey.”

The Province invests \$3.4 million annually to support the Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP). In 2023-24, this funding will support 102 adult literacy programs to be delivered by 71 providers in 132 communities around B.C. that will support more than 16,000 people in the province. This annual investment builds on last year’s 97 programs in 128 communities.

“Adults who increase their literacy and essential skills have more job opportunities, are more likely to continue their education and have better health – creating brighter futures and resilient communities,” said Sandra Lee, executive director, Decoda Literacy Solutions. “Decoda is proud to work with the Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills to support Community Adult Literacy Programs across the province. This funding allows us to provide training, professional development and resources for adult literacy providers in over 100 communities.”

These community-based, adult, family and Indigenous literacy programs help people gain skills in basic literacy, numeracy, life skills and employment preparation. The programs are delivered by trained volunteers and include one-on-one-tutoring and small-group classes.

“When people have strong literacy skills, their ability to advocate and make informed decisions for themselves and their families increases, their earning potential is greater and they become engaged community members,” said Desneiges Profili, executive director, Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL). “Empowering people to take charge of their learning better prepares them to acquire the skills needed in today’s changing world. With thousands of learners walking through CBAL doors every year, CALP funding is essential to ensure community members get the support they need to not just survive, but thrive.”

Learn More:

For details on the Community Adult Literacy Program (scroll to bottom):

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/adult-education/adult-upgrading>
(<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/adult-education/adult-upgrading>)

A list of the 2023-24 Community Adult Literacy Program funding recipients is available online:

https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/CALP_Recipients.pdf (https://news.gov.bc.ca/files/CALP_Recipients.pdf)

A backgrounder follows.

Ministry of Post-Secondary Education and Future Skills

Media Relations

604 209-7629

Backgrounders

Facts about literacy, adult literacy program funding in B.C.

- 45% of British Columbians aged 16 to 65 may have difficulty understanding newspapers, following instruction manuals, reading health information and other daily living tasks.
- 52% of British Columbians aged 16 to 65 may have difficulty calculating interest on a car loan, using information on a graph, calculating medicine dosage and other daily living tasks.

In 2023-24, the \$3.4 million annual funding will support 102 programs delivered by 71 providers in 132 communities throughout the province.

- The Community Adult Literacy Program (CALP) provides free basic English-language classes for newcomers, work permit holders and refugee claimants to support people new to B.C. and help set them up for success.
- Since 2017, the Community Adult Literacy Program has served more than 21,800 core learners and since 2020, the program has served more than 12,000 drop-in learners throughout the province.

In 2021-22, CALP programs served more than 4,250 learners:

- 20.9% identified as Indigenous;
- 72.3% female and 26.3% male;
- 40.0% employed, 33.4% unemployed and 15.6% retired; and
- 47.8% had previously completed some post-secondary education or skills training.

Translations

- [ExpandingAdultLiteracyPrograms_Arabic.pdf](#)

- (https://govbcnews.azureedge.net/translations/releases/2023PSFS0049-001346/ExpandingAdultLiteracyPrograms_Arabic.pdf)
- [ExpandingAdultLiteracyPrograms_Chinese\(simplified\).pdf](https://govbcnews.azureedge.net/translations/releases/2023PSFS0049-001346/ExpandingAdultLiteracyPrograms_Chinese(simplified).pdf)
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Acknowledgment

The B.C. Public Service acknowledges the territories of First Nations around B.C. and is grateful to carry out our work on these lands. We acknowledge the rights, interests, priorities, and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples - First Nations, Métis, and Inuit - respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws, and governments.