

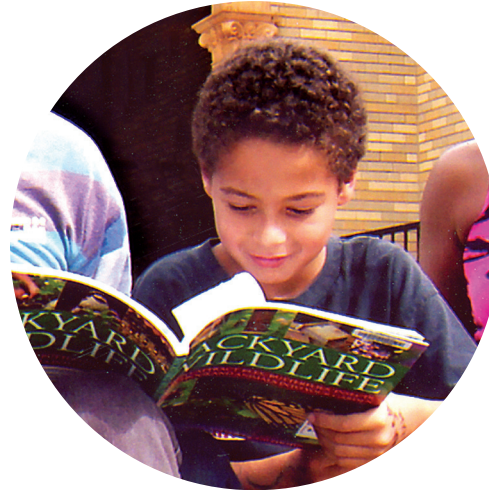
Journey to Success

The Literacy Resource Office of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries provides **support, information, and technical assistance** to more than sixty library and community-based programs throughout the state.

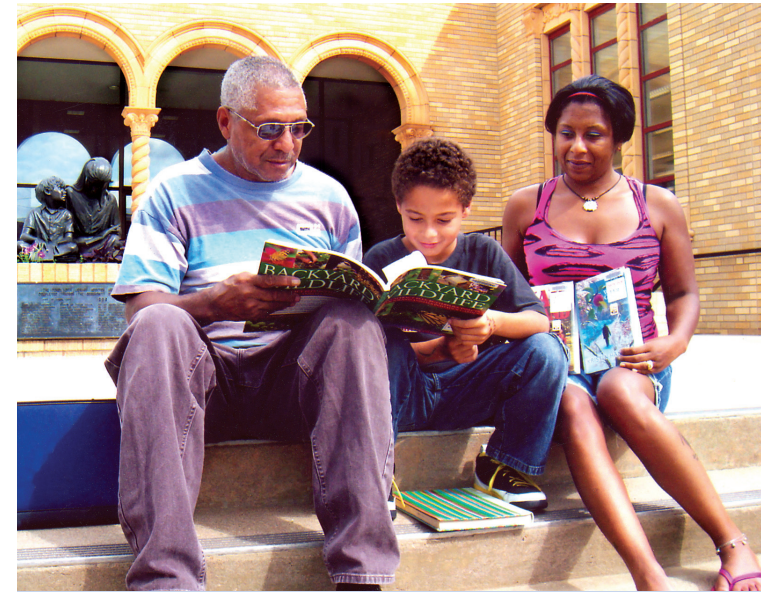
The Literacy Resource Office provides a **lending library of materials, funding opportunities, training, literacy-related marketing items, statewide newsletter, website, and toll-free number.**

Local literacy programs **collaborate with libraries, employers, educational providers, government agencies, civic organizations, and others** to serve their communities.

To be a part of Oklahoma's literacy effort, please contact your local literacy program or call the **Literacy Resource Office** at 405-522-3205 or toll-free in Oklahoma 800-522-8116, option 4.



On the front—Three generations reading together at the Ponca City Library, Ponca City, Oklahoma.



Literacy Learning for Life

Visit the Literacy Resource Office website at odl.state.ok.us/literacy for a listing of community literacy programs and other information about literacy in Oklahoma.

O • K • L • A • H • O • M • A
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Published by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries as authorized by 65 O.S. 2001 §3-110. 2,500 copies have been printed at a cost of \$847 [cc]. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse in the Oklahoma Department of Libraries. June 2015

Adult Literacy in Oklahoma

Facts and Statistics

Impact of Low Literacy on Oklahoma

Because there is no single measure to determine the rate and impact of illiteracy in Oklahoma, a number of factors are considered. These include census data; reports on dropouts, poverty, employment, and health; and national statistics and reports.

Families

The National Center for Family Literacy reports that low family income and a mother's lack of education are the two biggest risk factors that hamper a child's early learning and development.

Of Oklahoma children—according to the National Center for Children in Poverty

- 50% live in a low-income family
- 88% live in low-income families with parents who do not have a high school degree
- 49% live in low-income families with a single parent

In 2013, 70% of Oklahoma fourth graders were not proficient in reading, and 75% of eighth graders were not proficient in math. Both figures showed improvement from the previous year. 2014 Kids Count Profile

Employment

Education impacts an individual's employment and earning potential.

Adults with a bachelor's degree earn an average of \$58,240 a year, while those with a high school diploma earn \$35,580, and those without a high school diploma average \$20,350. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the unemployment rate for individuals age twenty-five or higher with at least a bachelor's degree was 3.5 percent. The unemployment rate was 6 percent for high school graduates and 9 percent for high school dropouts.

The Labor report also listed Oklahoma as one of the states with the largest share of employment in occupations that required a high school diploma or equivalent, at 40.7 percent. (2013)

The Economy

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, an estimated 9,000 Oklahoma students dropped out from the class of 2012 at great costs to themselves and their communities. If 8,000 (90%) of these drop out students had graduated, the estimated economic impact to the State of Oklahoma would have been:

- \$105 million—increased home sales

- \$83 million —increased annual earnings
- \$64 million —increased annual spending
- \$8.5 million — increased auto sales
- \$6.2 million —increased average state and low tax revenue
- 700 new jobs Alliance for Excellent Education 2013

Health

Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information needed to make appropriate health decisions.

Poor health literacy is a stronger predictor of a person's health than his age, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity. American Medical Association Foundation

For both men and women, more education often means longer life. On average, 25 year old college graduates can expect to live eight to nine years longer than their counterparts who have not completed high school. Time to Act: Investing in the Health of Our Children and Communities

In 2014, the United Health Foundation's America's Health Rankings listed Oklahoma in 46th place, a drop from the previous year. The poor health ranking is due to high rates of heart disease, diabetes, and obesity as well as unhealthy behaviors such as low consumption of fruits and vegetables and low rates of physical activity.

The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) measured the health literacy of adults living in the United States. According to the NAAL, approximately 36% of adults in the United States had limited health literacy. An additional 5% of the population was not literate in English. Only 12% of the population had a proficient health literacy level.

Using statistics from the report and estimated Oklahoma population census figures:

- 741,172 (26%) of Oklahoman adults did not understand when their next appointment was scheduled

- 1,197,287 (42%) did not understand instructions to "take medication on an empty stomach"
- 2,223,517 (78%) misinterpreted warnings on prescription labels
- 2,451,570 (86%) could not understand the rights and responsibilities section of a Medicaid application

English Language Learners

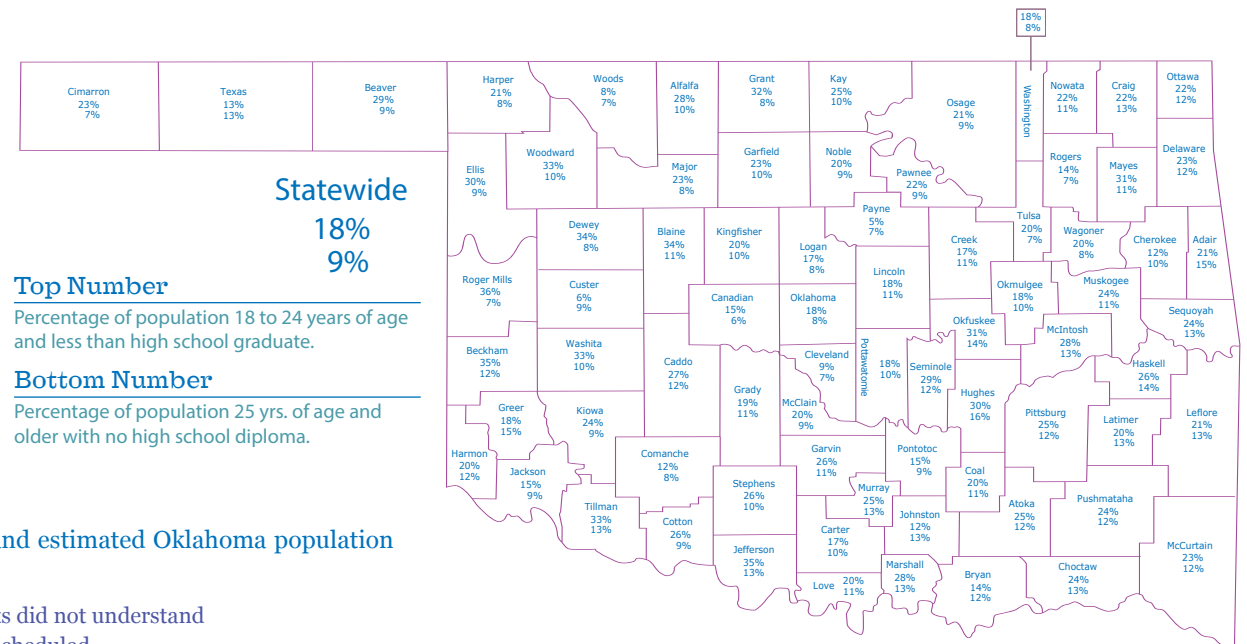
The changing demographics of Oklahoma impact literacy rates. Data from the 2013 American Community Survey reported that one in five U.S. residents speaks a foreign language at home. The data showed an all-time high of 61.8 million people who did not speak English at home, up 2.2 million from 2010. Nationally, the largest increases were speakers of Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic.

The report ranked Oklahoma as one of the states with the largest increase in foreign language speakers from 2000–2013—up 48 percent.

In Oklahoma, an estimated 122,088 individuals age 18 and older did not speak English "very well," with Spanish and Vietnamese as the top two non-English languages spoken.

American FactFinder, 2009–2013; American Survey 5-Year Estimates; Social, Economic, and Housing Statistics Division U.S. Census Bureau

Oklahoma Educational Levels



Based on statistics from the 2010 Census • U.S. Census Bureau • factfinder.census.gov