



New Zealand's Literacy & Numeracy Skills in 2023



We could do better

New Zealand is known for its high-quality education system, and the country has made significant progress in improving literacy and numeracy rates among adults. However, despite these efforts, a significant number of adults in New Zealand still struggle with basic literacy and numeracy skills, which can have a profound impact on our ability to participate fully in society and the workforce.

This white paper aims to provide an overview of the current state of adult literacy and numeracy rates in New Zealand, including an analysis of the key challenges and opportunities for improving these rates.

Current State of Adult Literacy and Numeracy Rates in New Zealand:

According to the most recent data available from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), around 48% of New Zealand adults have low literacy skills, while 50% have low numeracy skills. These rates are higher than the OECD average, indicating that there is still much work to be done to improve adult literacy and numeracy rates in New Zealand.

Low literacy and numeracy skills can have a significant impact on individuals' ability to participate fully in society and the workforce. Adults with low literacy and numeracy skills are more likely to experience unemployment, poverty, and social exclusion, and they may struggle to access essential services such as healthcare and financial support.

Challenges and Opportunities for Improving Adult Literacy and Numeracy Rates:

Improving adult literacy and numeracy rates in New Zealand requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of low literacy and numeracy, such as poverty, poor educational outcomes, and limited access to education and training opportunities.

Some of the key challenges and opportunities for improving adult literacy and numeracy rates in New Zealand include:



1. Addressing the root causes of low literacy and numeracy, such as poverty and poor educational outcomes, through targeted interventions and support programs.
2. Providing accessible and affordable education and training opportunities for adults, particularly those who have missed out on formal education or who are facing other barriers to education.
3. Developing and implementing evidence-based literacy and numeracy programs that are tailored to the specific needs of different groups of adults, such as those with low literacy and numeracy skills or those who speak English as a second language.
4. Strengthening partnerships between government, education providers, and community organizations to improve access to literacy and numeracy programs and support services.

“Providing fully funded at Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication for those who need it most, benefits New Zealand’s economy, organisations bottom line and individual’s wellbeing and contribution” says Aspire2 Business | Workplace Communication Sales Director, Leanne Clifton. “Our focus on the development of programmes that are tailored to individual organisations means we also get straight to the core of making a difference to the literacy and numeracy skills people require, and the benefits ripple out across the individuals home and work life. It’s hard not to find a need we cannot support.”

<https://workplacecommunication.co.nz/our-solutions/>

Conclusion:

Improving adult literacy and numeracy rates in New Zealand is critical for ensuring that all individuals have the skills they need to participate fully in society and the workforce. While progress has been made in recent years, there is still much work to be done to address the root causes of low literacy and numeracy and provide accessible and effective education and training opportunities for adults.

By taking a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of low literacy and numeracy and builds on the strengths and opportunities that exist within the New Zealand education system, we can work towards a future where all adults have the literacy and numeracy skills they need to succeed.